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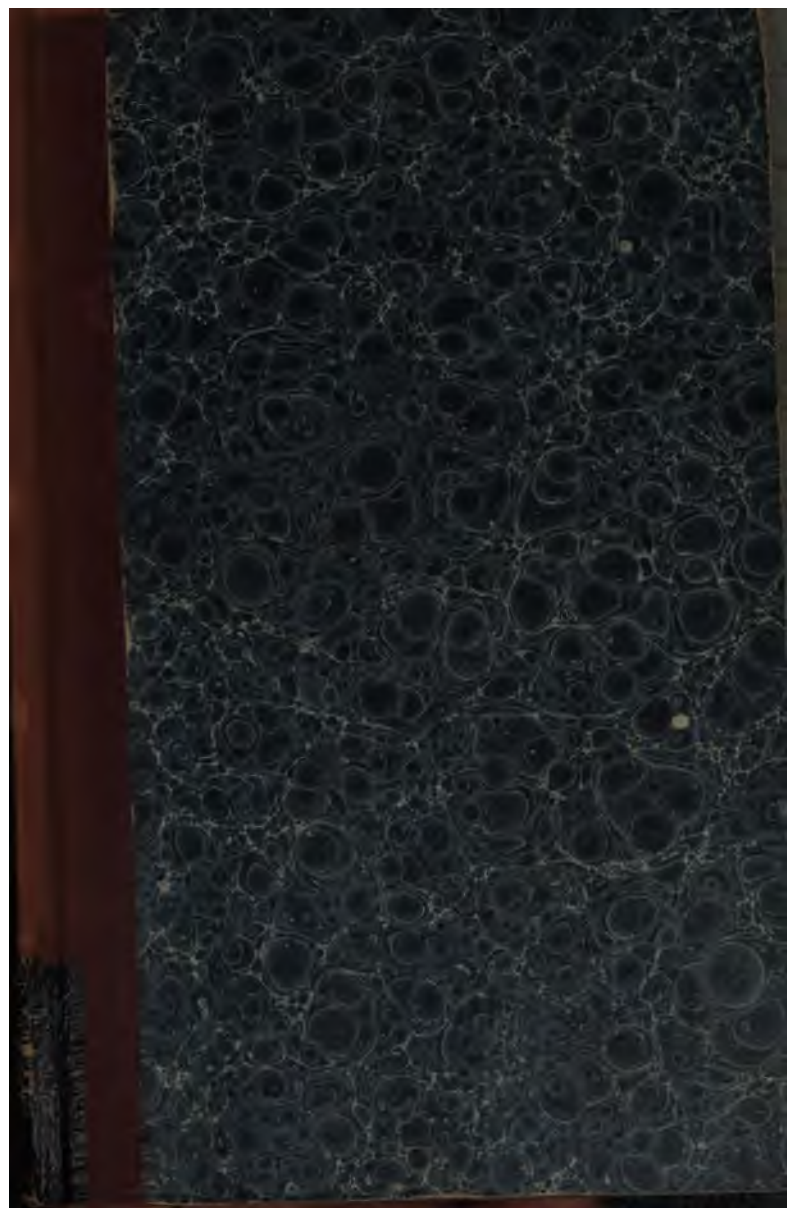
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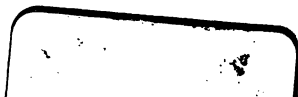
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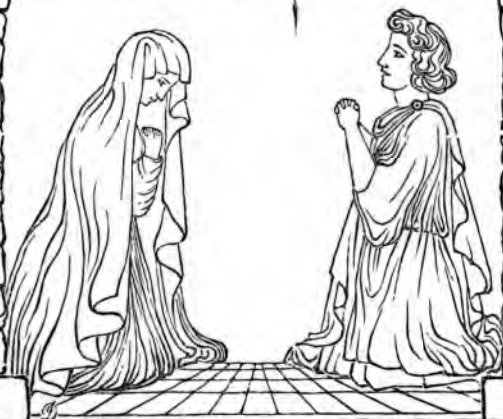






# CONVERSATIONS ON THE CHORAL SERVICE

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DICERE SIBI INVICEM



LONDON T HARRISON 11X PALL MALL



CONVERSATIONS  
ON  
THE CHORAL SERVICE;

BEING

AN EXAMINATION OF POPULAR PREJUDICES

AGAINST

Church Music.

2.  
7

"They said that the whole of their fault or crime was this; that they were went to meet on a certain day before light, and to sing by turns a hymn to CHRIST as God."—*Pliny's Epistle to Trajan.*

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## P R E F A C E.

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WHEN the *Parish Choir* was first issued, a few years since, it was thought by the small circle of friends who superintended it, that it would be useful to confront the current prejudices against Church Music, with the arguments for it, in a few familiar Dialogues; a kind of composition which relieves the sameness of controversy, and enables each side of the question to be put in the plainest and fairest possible way. The task of writing them, fell almost by accident to my lot; for it happened that about that time, being obliged by a certain circumstance to sit up the whole of one night, I took up a pen and beguiled the time by sketching out the first conversation. This was approved, and I was encouraged to continue the series, which appeared from time to time in the *Parish Choir*, and now are completed and published separately.

But of all possible authors, I confess that I have the least claim to originality. On the one hand, the objections against the Choral Service were supplied in abundance by, and taken literally and verbally from, newspapers and pamphlets, from the multifarious orators who hold up holy things to derision at public meetings, and from the common conversation of that part of society

which lets itself be led by such leaders. It were vain to attempt a philosophical classification of these objections. Some persons allege that the Choral Service is illegal, and ought to be discontinued, because the law should be obeyed. Driven from this position, they declare that the law is in error, and ought not to be obeyed. Some say that it disturbs their devotion; others that it is a help, but that we ought to want no helps to devotion. Some call it too artificial; others too natural. But the most solid of all objections seems to be this; viz., that many people do not like it.

On the other hand, the arguments used on the defensive side, have been culled from the various authors who are quoted in the course of the Conversations. It will be seen that I classify these arguments thus. First, those taken from the Bible, on which I have purposely refrained from dwelling much, because this Book is as accessible to every other layman as it is to me; and because, how any argument against any form of psalmody whatever can be fairly derived from this source, is past my comprehension. Besides, I know well that the objections against Church Music are rather political, sectarian, and personal, than religious; and it were a degradation of inspired language, to resort to it as a defence against mere prejudice. Secondly; of arguments derived from the customs of the Early Church, I might have made much, if I had filled my pages with quotations from *Bingham* or *Palmer*; but I do not pretend to that *kind of learning*. Yet it ought never to be forgotten,

that it is not to the Mediæval Roman Church, but to the Primeval Church of Antioch, that we trace the Choral Service. The Christians whom Pliny speaks of in the year 104, in the often-quoted words which I have taken for my motto, were not Romans, but inhabitants of Asia Minor. Thirdly, arguments derived from the history and interpretation of the Common Prayer Book, and from the various statutes, canons, and documents explanatory thereof, have been worked out as fully as space would permit; and I confess that I rather pique myself on the solution of that *Pons Puritanorum*, the phrase *say or sing*. But on this and kindred questions all doubt must be removed by that admirable judgment of Lord Stowell, which I have inserted at length; and which is entitled to the more weight, as being a clear determination of the law ecclesiastical and civil, delivered long before the existence of those present miserable party squabbles, from which the most upright judges can hardly, in our own day, escape unbiassed. Fourthly, other arguments are derived from that branch of science called *æsthetics*; which treats of feeling or emotion; and of the laws according to which it is excited and expressed. It treats besides of the works of Creation, in so far as they represent the mind and attributes of the Creator, and are capable of moving the mind of man; and of those imitations or representations of the works of Creation, which, when executed in such a manner as to evince feeling, are called *Art*. This kind of argument appeals to the *Common Sense*, and common feeling of mankind; and to

this Common Sense, we appeal from vulgar prejudice, in favour of such solemnities in Public Worship as shall render it least unworthy of the Great Object of that worship.

Lastly, I would urge the necessity of the greatest toleration and kindness in treating differences of opinion, arising from different degrees of musical taste, or of the power of using music as the instrument of individual feeling. Yet it must never be forgotten, that far higher principles are at stake than the gratification of divers degrees of taste; and that the National, solemn, and costly celebration of Public Worship, the open exaltation of Religion, and the outward recognition of the Sovereignty of the Creator, are natural, necessary, inherent duties, of primary and independent obligation, and not to be set aside to gratify the weakness, the prejudice, the parsimony, or the Puritanism, even of the multitude.

X.

LONDON, *August 3, 1853.*

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## CONVERSATIONS ON THE CHORAL SERVICE.

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### CONVERSATION I.

Argument from authority; Chanting the Creed; General principles; Puritans; and Dr. Arnold.

ONE fine Sunday morning, last July, Mr. Felix was returning from Westminster Abbey, when he met his friend, Mr. Bray, with his wife and family, in St. James's Park. After the usual salutations had passed,

How is it, said Mr. Felix, that I find you sauntering here so soon after twelve o'clock? I thought you were such constant attendants at church.

Mr. B. Why, if we must confess it, we all went to the opera last night,—it is so very seldom, you know, that we can go there,—and we were not in bed till nearly two o'clock. So this morning we had not finished breakfast in time for church, and we thought we would have a walk instead. Tired enough we were, I assure you; the house was full to the brim; Mrs. Bray and my daughter stood, for at least an hour and a half, till some gentlemen gave up their seats to them, and I am sure I stood from seven till past ten.

F. Pleasure is one of the most fatiguing things in the world—

B. But now, father confessor, you must give an account of yourself: How is it you are playing truant *this morning*?



F. I have been to service at the Abbey.

B. That is very well in its way, and better, I suppose, than not going to church at all; but you are fond of music, and go to hear that, and it is not like going to church for pure devotion.

F. You are rather too severe; I should have hoped I might have felt quite as much devotion at the Abbey, as at any other church, or more.

B. How can that be? such constant singing and chanting as they have there *must* take away all thoughts from prayer.

F. You must excuse me, but really I find the music a great help to devotion.

Mrs. B. Come, Mr. Felix, you are only saying this for argument's sake; for my part, I am sure there can be no real devotion where there is so much chanting; and I am only sorry that they have introduced so much singing into our church since that ridiculous Hullah system has come in. I declare I can hardly stand all the time they take to chant the *Te Deum*; and I must speak to the clergyman about it, or else get Mr. Bray to write to the newspapers.

F. The *Te Deum*, I admit, ma'am, *may* be more fatiguing to you than one whole act of an opera; but I cannot divine what you have to say against singing and chanting—why, what else do we go to church for?

Mrs. B. Of course, I do not object to two or three verses of a nice psalm or hymn; but at the Abbey and Cathedrals, it is all a sing-song.

Mr. B. The fact is, it is a mere relic of Popish times that has come down to the nineteenth century, and it would take a clever fellow to defend it on any grounds. Why, they not only chant psalms and anthems in cathedrals, but the prayers and responses, *and litany, and even the creed.*

F. Well, I am prepared to defend all of this ; and not only so, but to maintain that the singing and chanting that you complain of so bitterly, is the most proper way of performing the service ; when it can be done, and when the congregation is educated enough to join in it.

B. Then just, for argument's sake, let us take the creed, which I should think is as strong a case as any. Now, what reason *can* there be in favour of singing this ? I say it is done, merely from blind adherence to the superstitious usages of monkish times. We stand up in church to profess certain facts that we believe in ; but is it not quite against common sense to sing this ? A lawyer might as well sing an Act of Parliament, in a court of justice, when reading it, to show what the law is.

F. Granted, Mr. Bray, if when we say the Creed, we mean nothing more than a dry statement of historical facts, which we believe to be true. But is there not something in these very facts, to awaken emotions of gratitude and thankfulness, that may well be expressed in singing ?

Mrs. B. I am sure you can find nothing about singing the Creed in the New Testament.

F. Nor yet about numberless other usages, which Christians may adopt nevertheless, if conformable to the *spirit* of the sacred volume. We could not expect minute directions on every point. But what the New Testament does say about "*joy in believing*,"\* would show that the articles of our faith may have in them something more touching to our feelings than an Act of Parliament. If we examine the customs of the early Church——

B. You make me smile at your mention of the

\* See also, Colossians i. 12.

early Church, and the Fathers, and all that, just as if one might not find an excuse for any Popish rubbish in the writings of the Fathers. But give me our glorious old Reformers; they would have swept off all such practices, if they had been permitted; and I am sure that our growing enlightenment and free press will, before long, bring our religious customs to the state of purity which they advocated.

F. Pray, my dear Bray, have you studied this subject? Do you speak from your own knowledge of the Reformers?

B. No, I confess, I never had much taste for that kind of study; but what I say is the general opinion, and what we repeatedly see in the public press, and I never heard it denied.

F. People are apt to hazard general statements of this sort, which get repeated over and over again till they are taken for granted. But we can easily appeal to black and white,—here is my Prayer Book, and we will see what that says;—*that* is the work of our Reformers, and when we want to know their sentiments on anything that concerns us, we need not go to newspapers. Look at the Rubric,—“Then shall be *sung or said* the Apostle’s Creed,”—and the same with the Nicene or Athanasian.

B. Aye, you bring forward the Rubrics; but they were composed in an age when the Reformation had made little progress.

F. They were formally revised and settled in Charles the Second’s reign, more than one hundred years after the first English Prayer Book was published; and I do not think that any particular steps towards the Reformation, that is, the freeing our Church from Romish error, have either been taken, or wanted, since *then*.

B. What I mean is, that the Reformers did not go sufficiently to the core of abuses; Queen Elizabeth hindered them from entirely removing all Popish usages, and therefore, the Rubrics ought to be interpreted in a liberal spirit, according to the general feeling of Reformers. Give the true spirit, and not the letter. A paltry, Chinese sort of exactness is quite unnecessary.

F. When we leave the plain honest meaning of a thing, and interpret it after our own fancies of what *may have* been meant, what safeguard can we have against error at all? If you take leave to interpret a thing your way, surely you cannot complain of another man who interprets it in an opposite way. But, even supposing that you were allowed to interpret the Rubrics as you please, how would this tell against singing the Creeds?

B. Why such a custom is, as everybody knows, against the spirit and the principles of the Reformation; it is, as the newspaper says, quite opposed to the "manly simplicity of our ancient Reformers," and, therefore, we should only be carrying out their intentions by dropping such usages, although the strict written rule would seem to countenance them.

F. Again, my dear Bray, I must ask whether you have really taken any pains to know what the sentiments of the Reformers really were?

B. And, as I said before, I own, I never read much of their writings, but I go by what all the world says: the press, too, speaks constantly of the "principles that came in at the Reformation," so that I take it all for granted, as I do about William the Conqueror, though I never read much about him. We are obliged to get most of our knowledge upon trust.

F. So we are; but yet it strikes me, that it would

require no such very original information about our Reformers to know, that singing the Creed (which is our present subject), was not a thing they objected to. Did you ever see, at the end of the old version of the Psalms, certain translations of the Creeds, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments, into a kind of rough doggerel verse, and some of them signed W. W.? Do you know who W. W. was?

B. I can't say I do; but I should suspect him to be a Romanizer, by his attempts to corrupt the simplicity of the Protestant Ritual.

F. You are most unhappy in your guess, for as it happens, he was W. Whyttingham, the Dean of Durham, in Queen Elizabeth's time, who, so far from having any Romish tendency, was one who carried his zeal for the Reformation beyond what most people think the limits of Christian moderation. He was one of the most anti-Roman section of the Reformers, what is called a Puritan, and a hater of all Church form and ceremony whatever; but yet, this man not only sang the Creed, but even turned it into rhyme. So you see, that a man who represents the most anti-Roman body of the Reformers, not only sang the Creeds, but even versified them, so as to sing them (as he thought) the better.\*

Short as our conversation has been, we have touched upon almost all the authorities which, as far as members of the Church of England are concerned, can be brought for or against any religious custom whatever. First, we appealed to *common sense*, respecting which I will only observe, that the common sense of people who have looked into a subject is apt to differ not a little from the common sense of those who have not.

\* For a critique on Whyttingham's Versifications, vide Warton's *Hist. English Poetry*, iii. 68; Ed. 1781.

Then you quoted *Holy Scripture*. This, of course, is supreme; nothing that it condemns can be justifiable; but yet many practices may be good and laudable, although *Holy Scripture* does not even allude to them. I think it would puzzle an honest man, though, to find anything in *Scripture* against singing. Next, the *usages of the early Church*, which even you will admit, perhaps, to be some little argument in favour of a practice, if reasonable in itself, and not opposed to *Scripture*. Lastly, the *authority of the Reformers of the English Church*, which I think we ought to look for where they left it in black and white; namely, in the *Prayer Book*.

Now, try it by these four tests, and you will not find the custom of singing the *Creeds* so indefensible as you at first supposed.

B. I confess to you that I knew nothing of the subject till to-day, and had no idea that you could muster so fair a set of arguments as you have done; but, mind you, though *silenced*, I cannot quite call myself *convinced*; common opinion is so clearly on my side.

F. As for common opinion—you talked of Chinese exactness just now—and common opinion on this subject, seems to me just like a Chinese fortification.

B. What sort of affair is that?

F. There was a certain town in China, which the Governor expected to be attacked by the English during the late war. He had no means of defence; however, he thought there was nothing like making a good show, so he ran up huge walls of canvass, had them coloured to look like stone walls, and plenty of cannons painted on them. So he hoped that when the British came, the look of these fortifications, together with a horrible noise from his gongs, and a little

smoke, would frighten them away. But a couple of shots brought the whole thing about his ears. So it is with the arguments used against church music. The newspapers talk of its being "repugnant to the holy simplicity of primitive Christianity, subversive of those Protestant principles for which our martyred forefathers shed their sacred blood, and utterly inconsistent with the moral progress, and intellectual enlightenment of the nineteenth century." Fine sounding words enough! But when we come to look into the thing, we find that the Primitive Christians, and our martyred forefathers, delighted in church music; and all these rhodomontade statements fall to pieces like the Chinese fortification.

B. But still it is a curious fact, that all men of progress and enlightened ideas now-a-days, are on the other side.

F. What do you say, then, of Dr. Arnold?

B. What, the great Dr. Arnold? He never could have been a friend to any superstitious practice.

F. Yet he sang the Creed.

B. What—the enemy of priestcraft sing the Creed? I do not know what to say to that, if 'tis true.

F. Suppose that we continue our conversation some day, and talk over some of the other practices of choral worship, which are quite as unpalatable to you, at present, as the chanting the Creed?

B. With all my heart, for I am a friend to free discussion; but I won't promise that you shall convert me.

F. But I shall be quite satisfied if I get you to examine the question, instead of deciding blindfold. Now that we have arrived at my house, pray walk in, and let me show you a passage in Stanley's *Life of Arnold*; and I will read you a page out of a very

candid and liberal writer—Bishop Wetenhall—on the very point we have been arguing.

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#### DR. ARNOLD SINGING THE NICENE CREED.

His biographer describes—

“The visible animation with which, by force of long association, he joined in the musical parts of the service, to which he was by nature wholly indifferent, as in the chanting of the *Nicene Creed*, which was adopted in accordance with his conviction that creeds in public worship (*Serm.* vol. iii. p. 310,) ought to be used as triumphant hymns of thanksgiving; or still more in the *Te Deum*, which he loved so dearly, and when his whole countenance would be lit up at his favourite verse—‘When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven for all believers.’”—*Stanley’s Life of Arnold*, 6th ed. 1846, p. 123.

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#### BISHOP WETENHALL ON SINGING THE CREED.

“Of creeds, we have two that are usually sung, the *Athanasian*, which is only chanted, or sung, in the *Gregorian* way, on some more considerable festivals; and that commonly called the *Nicene Creed*, which is curiously set by several hands, and constantly sung in the Communion Service. Now, why any should deem it improper to confess our faith in singing to God, I do not apprehend. What is more apt to draw forth the exercise of faith, hope, gratitude, and love, than the contemplation of the Divine Nature, of the Incarnation of our Lord, of the office and mission of the Holy Ghost;—than the commemoration of all the parts of our Redemption, of our present advantages in Church communion, and of our future expectations! We do, without vanity, profess, that in the singing our Creed, we exercise these several Christian graces, and, at the same time, both lift up our hearts to God



in this our confession, and declare our joy before men and angels, to the praise of our God, that we, from our hearts, receive these truths, and expect to be saved in the belief of them, blessing God who has revealed them to us, and wrought in our souls a persuasion of them. What any can blame in this practice, I do not see. Some are of a mind, that the hymn which the early Christians used to sing to *Christ as God*, in their early assemblies, was their Creed, and the conjecture is by no means improbable.”\*

\* Edward Wetenhall was born at Lichfield in 1636, and educated at Westminster School under the famous Dr. Busby. From thence, in 1665, he was elected scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, but afterwards removed to Lincoln College, Oxford. He became minister of Longcombe, in Oxfordshire, and afterwards Canon Residentiary of Exeter, in which city he was master of a school. He passed over into Ireland in 1672, by the invitation of Michael Boyle, then Archbishop of Dublin, and afterwards Lord Primate of Ireland. On his arrival he graduated as Doctor in Divinity in the University of Dublin, became master of a great school in that city, and curate of St. Werburgh's Church there; and soon afterwards was elected Precentor of Christ Church Cathedral. He was, on the 23rd March, 1678, consecrated in that church to the united Sees of Cork and Ross, and about twenty years afterwards was translated to the Bishoprick of Kilmore and Ardagh.

He died in London, 12th November, 1713, aged seventy-eight, and lies buried in the south transept of Westminster Abbey, under a grave-stone, with a Latin inscription recording his name, his age at the date of his death, and the titles of the Sees of which he was Bishop.

His discharge of the pastoral office was earnest and assiduous: and besides the laborious care with which he superintended his dioceses, he rebuilt the Church and Episcopal house of Ardagh, which had been demolished in the Irish Rebellion, and was a benefactor to his Sees.

Though attached to the Cathedral Service, he was not what is called a *High Churchman*; and would seem, from some expressions in his Will, to have sided with the Puritans of his day in some of their objections against the Church; for in it, after declaring that he dies “a Protestant of the United Church of England and Ireland, which he judges to be the purest Church in the world, and to come nearest to the Apostles' model,” he goes on to state his belief,—“that there are divers points which might be altered for the better, both in her Articles, Liturgy, and Discipline, but especially in the conditions of clerical communion.”

"To conclude," says Dr. Wetenhall, "the singing not only the *Nicene*, but the *Athanasian Creed* too, is approved by several of the first Reformers; the *Nicene*, by Luther, expressly in the Communion Office, which he modelled, and the *Athanasian* too, by Peter Martyr, in his common-place touching singing. So that they who reprehend this practice must not only condemn antiquity, and the practice of the Universal Church, but even the judgment of the Reformers, both Lutheran and Calvinian."—*On Gifts and Offices in the Service of God*, p. 328, ed. Dublin, 1679.

## CONVERSATION II.

Argument from Utility; Distinction between Private and Public Prayer; One use of the Ecclesiastical Chant; Public Worship.

MR. BRAY. Well, Mr. Felix, I see clearly enough that a case *may* be made out in favour of some parts of the cathedral service. An abstract argument, however, has not much weight with me; I am a practical man; a man of the nineteenth century, and I want to know the *use of it*. I am for sifting all antiquated customs, and casting off such as are not consistent with the Progress of Mind, and all that kind of thing, that distinguishes the present Era.

Mrs. B. I am practical too, and I feel that the going to a cathedral does not produce the same sort of impression as going to one's own quiet parish church.

Mr. Felix. You are not singular in what you say, but let us sift the matter a little. Be good enough to tell me in a few words what the difference is, that you find, between the cathedral service and the parish church service, as far as relates to their effects on your mind.

Mrs. B. We went last Sunday afternoon to Westminster Abbey, and we might almost as well have been on Primrose Hill. We were a little too late, to begin with, and had to go round to the little door in *Poet's Corner*; there we met such a stream of people!

some coming out, and others going in, as to an exhibition. When we got inside, they had just begun to chant the psalms, and we could not even attempt to get into the choir, it was so full;—so we sat down on some benches outside, and got a civil verger to show us the place in the Prayer Book, and listened as well as we could. Next came the Lesson, of which we could not hear one syllable; then more singing, which we could follow pretty accurately, and, afterwards, the prayers and responses, which were chanted in such a clear tone, that we could hear every word as distinctly as if we had been in the choir. But the distressing part of it was to see the people come flocking in, staring about them, talking and laughing, and then going away when they had heard enough; at times too, the door of the choir opened, and a perfect wave of people came out, and others pushed in, often as rudely as possible.

F. Such scenes as those are distressing enough, but not, unhappily, peculiar to Westminster Abbey. You have heard before now of ladies fainting, and pockets picked, in the crush at ——— Chapel, when a popular preacher was announced; in fact, there always will be people who go to church to be amused. Yet it is gratifying to know that people do go in such crowds to the Abbey, and, I believe, ere long, some alterations will be made which will permit an almost unlimited number to join in the worship. But all this proves nothing against the cathedral service.\*

Mrs. B. I admit it was not a fair trial; but on former occasions, when I have been to a cathedral, what with the novelty of the place——

\* This was written just before the late most unfortunate alterations at the Abbey. When will a Dean and Chapter be found *bold enough to throw open the nave for the people to worship in?*

F. Pray let us take the case on its own merits. We have no right to blame the cathedral service for the ill behaviour of others, or because curiosity may have had as much to do with our going there, as devotion.

Mrs. B. Well, then, I will endeavour to suppose myself going to a cathedral, or church where they sing, solely to say my prayers; and, then, there is a something—perhaps I can hardly define it—which seems to take away all devotional feeling. When I am in our own church, everything is so plain and quiet, that I am able to concentrate my thoughts within myself, as it were; to be absorbed entirely in the contemplation of holy things; but, in the cathedral, everything seems so *outward*, if I may use an awkward term; the chanting and singing seem to keep up a constant excitement (independent of their novelty and strangeness to me), quite alien to a real spiritual adoration of the Almighty.

B. I think you have hit the right nail on the head, for it is just my idea; I do not pretend to very great piety, you know, but I think we ought to go to church, at least once of a Sunday, it sets such a good example; but then, when I do go, I do not like to feel amused, or excited by music; it ought to be a solemn, serious kind of affair.

F. I think, my dear friend, if you analyse your feelings honestly, you will find them to be something of this sort: you spend the whole week in business, and in other ways, that afford amusement and excitement enough, and then you think to balance your religious account by spending two gloomy hours in church on a Sunday morning as a kind of penance, and the more gloomy they are, the better satisfied *you are with yourself for submitting to it*. However,

let me turn to your wife's argument, which is, that in the cathedral service there is not so much scope for quiet abstraction and meditation.

Mrs. B. That is it.

F. Excuse me, then, if I observe, that you seem to misapprehend the nature and idea of public, or social worship. I do not say a word in disparagement of silent, devout meditation, but I do say, that the public service of the Church is not the proper time and place for it;—it is not the *kind* of prayer intended.

B. What authority can you bring for that idea?

F. Of course, I do not pretend to be original in my arguments; I do but echo the voice of some divine into whose works I have chanced to dip; and now if you will give me leave, I will quote a short passage to the purpose, from the 21st Homily of the Church of England, which treats of Common Prayer and Sacraments.

“Now let us see how many sorts of prayers there be. In the Scriptures we read of three sorts of prayer, whereof two are private, and the third common. The first is that which St. Paul speaketh of in his Epistle to Timothy, saying, *I will that men pray in every place, lifting up pure hands, without wrath and striving.* And it is the devout lifting up of the mind to God, without the uttering of the heart's grief or desire by open voice. Of this prayer we have example in the First Book of the Kings (chap. i.), in Anna, the mother of Samuel, when, in the heaviness of her heart, she prayed in the temple. She prayed in her heart (saith the text), but there was no voice heard. After this sort must all Christians pray, not once in a week, or once in a day only, but as St. Paul writeth to the Thessalonians, *without ceasing.*—The second sort of prayer is spoken of in the Gospel of St. Matthew, where it is said, *When thou prayest, enter into thy secret closet, and when thou hast shut the door to thee, pray unto thy Father in secret, and thy Father which*

*seeth in secret shall reward thee.* Matt. vi. After this manner prayed Cornelius, Acts x. These be the two private sorts of prayer; the one mental, that is to say, the devout lifting up of the mind to God: and the other vocal, that is, the secret uttering of the griefs and desires of the heart with words, but yet in a secret closet, or some solitary place.—The third sort of prayer is public, or common. Of this prayer, speaketh our Saviour Christ when he saith, *If two of you shall agree upon earth, upon anything, whatsoever ye shall ask, my Father, which is in Heaven, shall do it for you; for wheresoever two or three be gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.*—Matt. xviii.

So much says the Homily concerning the three kinds of prayer. Now let me subjoin a short extract, where it speaks of their relative dignity and importance.

“Although God hath promised to hear us when we pray privately, so it be done faithfully and devoutly, yet by the histories of the Bible it appeareth that Public and Common prayer is most available before God, and, therefore, as much to be lamented that it is no better esteemed among us which profess to be but one body in Christ.”—(Here follow allusions to the preservation of Nineveh, Jonah iii.; to the common prayer and fasting, ordered in Joel ii.; to the prayer of the congregation for the deliverance of St. Peter, Acts xii.)—“Therefore, brethren,” continues the Homily, “as a people willing to receive at God’s hands such good things as in the Common Prayer of our Church are craved, let us join ourselves together in the place of Common Prayer, and with *one voice and one heart*, beg of our heavenly Father, all those things which he knoweth to be necessary for us.”

Thus you see the authority I have for asserting the *distinction of public common prayer*, from private

individual prayer; and mark the emphatic words with which the Homily goes on, "I forbid you not private prayer; but I exhort you to esteem Common Prayer as it is written."

Mrs. B. But what difference need there be in the manner of our praying, whether we pray in public or in private?

F. I answer you out of the Homily. Common prayer "is for a multitude to ask one and the self thing with one voice, and one consent of mind." Of course, if it *is* public common worship, you are not to sit apart wrapt up in private meditation, but to join with others *outwardly*, with your *voice* as well as your heart. Look at Holy Scripture; can you find a page of it that does not speak of open thanksgiving with the voice? Look at the Prayer Book; when confession of sin is to be made, it is to be *your* open confession; when prayer is said, *you* are required to answer Amen, to make the prayer your own: and if *you* are not expected to sing praises, why not leave out the response which every one is supposed to assent to,—"*And our mouth shall shew forth THY praise?*" I only wish the people who talk so plausibly about primitive simplicity and silent spirituality of worship would think of the early Christians; *they* were no dumb listeners; but *their* voices in their alternate chant resounded from side to side like the waves on the shore; *their* Amens and Hallelujahs re-echoed from the roof like the thunders of heaven. But our time is growing short; so put this copy of the Homily in your pocket; it will well repay your trouble; and it is full of quotations showing how the primitive Christians used the Liturgies we now use. Just reflect on the idea of *public common worship*; and in some future con-



versation we will endeavour to follow it out; to see what is the great *object* of public worship, and how well the choral service is adapted to realize that *idea*, and to fulfil that object.

B. There is one question I want to ask before we take our leave, and that is, how can you possibly defend that kind of singing tone in which they read all the prayers in cathedrals? Instead of saying, "*Let us pray*," the minister might as well say, "*Let us sing*."

F. I have only time to give you one reason to-day, Mr. Bray; and it shall be one quite after your own heart, namely, its *utility*.

B. I do not see the use of it; quite the reverse; it seems to me unnatural and undevotional.

F. When you were at the Abbey last Sunday, outside the choir, which part of the service could you *not* hear distinctly?

B. The Lessons.

F. Certainly, because they were only *read*, and not chanted. In buildings of such immense size, if the clergyman chants in an uniform clear tone, he can be heard as well as possible; but if he says the prayers merely in a common conversational tone, he can scarcely be heard over half the choir. I have other reasons, in abundance, in behalf of the ecclesiastical chant, but this must suffice to-day. We have now discussed a few points of *principle*, and a few points of *detail*, and I have given you a good church authority for part of my arguments. We will take an early opportunity, if you please, of continuing our discussion, and now I will conclude with one brief anecdote in favour of the chant. In the order of ritual for the coronation of our monarchs, *the Litany was always* appointed to be sung by two

of the bishops, who knelt at a low desk, or *faldstool*, and sung the priests' part together, whilst the responses were sung by the choir. But at the coronation of Queen Victoria, an alteration crept somehow into the Ritual, and it was directed that the Litany was to be *read* by two bishops. I will not stop to ask how two people could read together to any purpose, unless each read in the same tone,—that is, *chanted*;—but they did read it nevertheless; and what was the consequence? It was a perfect dumb show. The choir, who were at no very great distance, could not hear a word; and a person was obliged to stand near the bishops with a white flag in his hand, which he lowered as a signal to the choir when the response was to be made. Now, considering that the Litany is pre-eminently a *common* prayer, requiring the voice both of priest and people in every sentence, I think you will agree with me that a means of enabling them to hear each other's voice distinctly, would not be quite inconsistent with common sense and devotion, nor yet with Utility, and the Progress of Mind, and all that kind of thing that in your opinion distinguishes the nineteenth century.

P.S. The opening of the Great Exhibition, in May, 1851, may be adduced as another instance of multitudinous worship, spoiled through the want of the chant.

## CONVERSATION III.

Argument from the nature of Public Worship; great object of Public Worship; excellency of Praise, above Prayer.

MRS. BRAY. What part of the Choral Service shall we discuss to-day, Mr. Felix?

MR. F. When persons are discussing any subject about which they differ, the wisest plan is to find some *general principle* on which they agree; and to use that as a starting-place for their arguments. It saves an immensity of trouble; because one *principle*, if agreed upon, may settle the question of a thousand *petty details*.

B. You would attack the root instead of the branches.

F. Certainly. Besides, in order to demonstrate any point, which is *unknown* or *doubtful*, we must begin with some other point which is *known* and *agreed upon*; and there are one or two general principles respecting the Church Service which, if I can once get your assent to, I flatter myself that you will see that most of the details of the Choral Service follow, as matters of course.

B. I shall be pretty cautious in making any admissions; however, let us hear your principles.

F. Tell me then, to begin with, what is the great object of public worship? in plain English, what do we go to church for, principally?

B. To say our prayers, to be sure.

Mrs. B. And likewise to receive instruction.

F. This, I know, is uppermost in most people's minds, because, instead of asking any one where he goes to church, it is common to say, "Who do you hear, sir?" and people constantly tell you, "I attend Dr. So-and-So's ministry," or, "I sit under Mr. So-and-So." Now, no one can say that the offering up of prayer, and the hearing Holy Scripture and Sermons, are not vitally important; but yet, I am supported by very great authority in asserting, that they are not the *most* important parts of Divine Worship.

B. What then is?

F. *Praise*. This seems to have been the idea of the compilers of the Common Prayer Book, because in the Exhortation, where the purposes for which we "assemble and meet together" in church are enumerated, we find that the "rendering thanks," and "setting forth God's most worthy praise," are put first; and that the psalms and hymns occupy almost as much space as all the rest of the service put together, exclusive of the lessons.

B. This is no great argument in my opinion, for, perhaps, it was mere accident; I should like some better proofs.

F. You shall have them then, and they lie in a nutshell. *Prayer*, relates to *our* sins and miseries; *praise*, to God's goodness and mercy; prayer is our occupation as mortals and sinners; praise, a privilege which we share with pure angels, and spirits made perfect; prayer will cease with our present lives—praise, as we devoutly hope, will occupy eternity. Measure, then, time with eternity,—things earthly with things heavenly,—sin with purity,—and God *with man*, and you will then see how much in its

dignity praise exceeds prayer. You must not understand this reasoning though, as if it were meant to depreciate prayer in the least, but only as asserting that the praise of God is the very highest occupation in which any created being can be employed.

Mrs. B. What then of the Holy Communion? Is not that the most important part of Divine Service?

F. Undoubtedly; and it is in the highest sense *the* "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving;" *the* EUCHARIST.

B. Is that the meaning of the word Eucharist? It is Greek, is it not?

F. Here is a dictionary, and we will see.—The word signifies "cheerfulness; gratitude; the thankful commemoration of benefits."

B. May I ask what that book is that you seem to have been taking your arguments from?

F. I will read you a whole passage presently, containing the arguments at length, which I have just given you the pith of. It is *A Rationale on Cathedral Worship*, or *Choir Service*, being a sermon preached in Hereford Cathedral, in 1720, at the anniversary meeting of the Choirs of Worcester, Gloucester, and Hereford, by Thomas Bisse, D.D., Chancellor of Hereford. It is a most eloquent explanation and defence of the various usages of the Choral Service, and every Churchman ought to read it; more especially before he ventures to join your friends the newspaper-writers in calling these usages *innovations*, *undevootional*, *un-Protestant*, &c.

Mrs. B. I should like to read Dr. Bisse's work, because one really never finds any explanation at all *of chanting* and such things in the ordinary run of *religious books*, and as the clergy do not notice them,

or teach us anything about them, one gathers the idea that they are either quite unimportant, or else, rather wrong than right.

B. But let us come back to our argument—suppose we grant Dr. Bisse's doctrine to be true, that praise is in its nature higher than prayer, what inference do you want to draw?

F. Grant that; and grant also the point we discussed in our last conversation, viz., that the public common worship in church is a something different in idea from mere private prayer, then I think it follows, that that mode of celebrating public worship must be the best in which praise is the distinguishing feature, and which affords the greatest opportunity for the whole body of worshippers to join, not only in that offering of praise, but also in the prayers, confessions, and every other part of the service in which the people bear a part. And that best mode of celebrating Divine worship is the **CHORAL SERVICE**.

B. You are a little too quick for me;—I am not quite certain that I see how your conclusion follows your premises.

F. I mean, in the first place, that if the offering of praise to God be really the highest privilege and employment of any human being, that that form of public worship must be the best, which gives the most ample scope and opportunity for offering that praise in the most refined and elevated forms. And in the next place, if public worship consists—not of the isolated meditations and solitary raptures of individuals apart—but of the united common service of worshippers, in which every one should openly bear his own part; then it also follows that that mode of *public worship* must be the best, which gives the

fullest scope and opportunity for each individual worshipper to take his share in the work. And if we examine the subject with the light of that common sense which tells us that any given means is good in proportion as it answers the purpose intended, we shall, I think, when we come to look into the details, see that the Choral Service is the best form of service, the best vehicle of public praise and thanksgiving.

B. You must pardon my interrupting you; but really, although we have been conversing so long about the *Choral Service*, I cannot boast of knowing exactly what you mean by it; I never heard of it in my younger days; so pray favour us with a definition of it.

F. The most exalted idea that I can give you of what it means—if I may do it with reverence—is as it is described in the Revelations, *the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying "Alleluia."* But to return to this earth. The word *choral* evidently implies the concert of many voices singing in harmony; and by *choral service*, is meant that mode of celebrating the public service by both priests and people in which they sing all portions allotted to each respectively, so as to make it one continued psalm of praise, confession, thanksgiving, supplication, and intercession, from beginning to end.

B. Everything, in fact, to be chanted.

F. Precisely. The psalms and canticles to be sung aloud by the whole congregation, led by a competent choir, if possible (though a choir is not necessary); the priest to chant his part of the suffrages, vesicles, and litany, and the congregation to take up the response in full chorus.

*Mrs. B.* But do you want to have such a grand

method of performing Divine Service introduced into all churches? Such a thing is impossible.

F. There need be no difficulty whatever in the thing. What is wanted for a service which is meant to unite the voices of the whole population, is music which shall be so simple that every person who has any ear and any voice at all can sing it; and which shall be the same in every church, so that let a man go to church where he may, he shall meet with the same music, just as he does with the same liturgy. This is just the music which was provided at the Reformation in Cranmer's litany and in the Reformer Marbeck's "Common Prayer Noted," and which has been cheaply published in the *Parish Choir*. Those simple and most touching musical phrases for the responses and litany: the noble old church tones for the Psalms, and a score of simple metrical psalm and hymn tunes, would suffice. They might be learned by ear, and sung by the whole population all over the land. I would undertake to teach the whole of it in three days to any number of children, in any parish in England.

B. But there is surely something more than this; a good choir is not to be raised in three days?

F. A good *choir*! certainly not. I was speaking only of the music necessary for the audible responses and psalmody of the *congregation*—of the people. Of course, if you can have a trained quire to lead them and to sing anthems, and the more elaborate musical compositions in their proper places, to the praise and glory of God, so much the better. But I would have no quire to supplant the voice of the congregation; nay, with a good religious scheme of national education, in which the nature and duties of public worship were properly taught, there would be no need of



quires. Every congregation would be a quire in itself. But it is quite late—I wanted to have talked again about the *chant*; but that we must take up at our next meeting; and I will content myself now with reading the passage I spoke of from Dr. Bisse; and I beg you will mark especially what he says of the practices of the early Church. Besides, I will show you an analogous passage from the work of an eminent dissenter.

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DR. BISSE ON THE EXCELLENCY OF PRAISE  
COMPARED WITH PRAYER.

“Let us consider the excellency of praise and thanksgiving, above and before, though not exclusive of, prayers, supplications, and intercessions. These are, we know and profess, all necessary offices, and ought to be found in all Christian liturgies, being commanded by the Apostle: but then each, as he commands also, must be joined with thanksgiving.

“This excellency will appear by viewing the difference of their subjects; for most different they are. The themes of praise are either the perfections of the Divine attributes, or of the Divine operations, which are but the display and exercise of those attributes manifested in the works of God. But what are the subjects of our prayers and supplications? Are they not our infirmities and wants; or what is worse, our manifold sins and wickedness? And what are the contents of our confessions, but to bewail and supplicate for mercy to forgive all those sins? And what of our collects, but to pray for grace to supply our wants, and to heal all our infirmities? \* \* \*

“The worship of the Church triumphant is wholly made up of hymns, those songs of praise for what they enjoy, and of thanksgiving for what is passed, without any mixture and allay of supplications.

“*For why? their wants and wickedness, which are the subjects of them, are ceased: all the evils which*

fill the litanies of the Church militant, are passed away. And they that are redeemed from them, have nothing to do in heaven but to sing praises to their Redeemer; which they do before the throne, as we read, *resting not day and night*. Perpetual hallelujahs are represented to be the employment of the heavenly choir; these are the chief ingredients, interwoven through every song, which they sing unto the Lamb, and which employ their golden harps, wherewith they are said to play before the throne. So that we may measure the excellency of praise above prayers and supplications, with the same argument as St. Paul doth the excellency of charity above faith and hope, not only from its properties, but from its duration—because it *never faileth*. Praise ceaseth not with this state of mortality like the other, but will accompany the saints into heaven even as charity will; praise being, if we may so speak, the religion of the saints above, as charity their work or employment; who shall, and who can be conceived to have nothing to exercise either their devotion or communion, but the praises of God, and the love of one another.

“Upon this account the Christian Church, even though militant here on earth, hath in all ages made the greatest part of her public worship to consist of praise. Psalms, hymns, and doxologies, all being songs of praise, fill up the liturgies of the ancient Church, as far as can be judged from the remains and ruins of them. And if we look into the worship of our own Church, wherein Bishop Beveridge affirms we may behold all the practices of the Catholic Church as in a mirror, we shall find our public service to consist principally of the materials of praise and thanksgiving.

“For, after the Confession and Absolution, how doth our Church enter upon the work of praise? thus addressing herself, ‘*O Lord, open thou our lips, and our mouths shall shew forth thy praise;*’ and then actually breaking forth into praise in the Doxology, ‘*Glory be to the Father,*’ &c. Then, after the invitatory psalm, ‘*O come, let us sing unto the Lord;*’ &c.,

which is, therefore, called the *Invitatory*, because it invites, exhorts, and calls us on to this blessed work ; it begins the portion of psalms appointed for the day ; which portion, if duly measured, will be found to equal the rest of the service either of morning or evening, if we except the lessons, which, though a portion of the service, are not a part of our worship, being inserted, not as matter of adoration, but of instruction. Much more, then, if to the portion of psalms we add the two hymns, which are appointed to follow the two lessons respectively. And, we may observe, that all the creeds which then follow, are appointed to be ‘sung,’ as well as ‘said.’ After the creed, in the first compilation of our Liturgy, in the reign of Edward the Sixth, there followed only three collects, namely, for the day, for peace, and for grace, which, in choirs and places where they sing, were followed by the anthem ; and then the whole concluded with the prayer of St. Chrysostom, and the benedictory prayer of St. Paul, ‘*The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,*’ &c. There were then no general supplications or intercessions in the daily service ; and the Litany, which contains these, being the subjects of humiliation and distress, is reserved to its proper days. Which things I only mention at present, to show you, that by the intention of our reformers, the daily public worship of our Church doth and ought to consist chiefly of praises and thanksgivings, manifested in doxologies, hallelujahs, in psalms, hymns, and anthems, and that prayers, supplications, and intercessions, as set forth in the collects and Litany, though necessary duties, should only follow as appendages to that nobler work.”—*Rationale on the Cathedral Service, edited by F. P. Pocock, B. A. Cambridge, 1842, pp. 215, 222.*

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REV. MR. BINNEY ON PREACHING, PRAYER, AND  
PRAISE.

“*THE three exercises just referred to, may without impropriety or irreverence be spoken of in the same*

manner in which the Apostle speaks of the three great elements of the Christian Life; faith, hope, and love. \* \* \* Love never faileth, but whether there be prophecies they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. In consistency with this, preaching will be unnecessary when all are saved and none ignorant. 'They shall know even as they are known.' Prayer will be superseded, when nothing is left to bewail or fear, deprecate or hope. 'There shall be no more curse.' Praise alone of the services of the Church *never faileth*; nothing can supersede it; it can never die."—*The Service of Song in the House of the Lord*; by Thomas Binney.

## CONVERSATION IV.

Chanting the Psalms; antiquity, reasonableness, and beauty of the Antiphonal Chant.

MR. FELIX. Can you agree to the *general principles* which we discussed at our last meeting?

Mr. Bray. I suppose we may as well. But have the goodness to repeat them in few words.

F. They are these: that public worship is a thing differing in its nature from mere private prayer; that when people meet in church, they are to offer their worship to God as the public common act of one body; that the English Liturgy requires the outward vocal response of the people, not their mere inward silent assent; that the chief part of public worship consists in praising God in psalms and hymns; and that the *Choral* method of performing divine service is the most perfect, because it affords the best opportunity for the audible response of the people, where they ought to respond aloud, and because it includes the singing of the psalms and hymns. Now let us talk a little about that mode of singing psalms which is called *chanting*.

B. The very word *chant* is connected with some most undefinable objections in my mind. I do not like it, and yet can hardly say why; but I have some notion that there is Popery lurking at the bottom of it. *What is the exact meaning of the word chant?*

F. It comes from the Latin *cantare*, to sing; and originally meant any kind of singing; but it is now used only as an ecclesiastical term, to signify the *singing* or *musical recitation of words not arranged in metre*, such as the psalms of the day, and other parts of the Church service. So when people talk of *singing* a psalm, they generally mean one of the psalms in metre; but when they talk of *chanting*, they mean those Psalms in the prose version which are portioned out for morning and evening use in the Prayer Book. These psalms are evidently intended to be sung; it is against common sense to *read* psalms if we *can* sing them: the Hebrews used to sing them; the Early Christians sung them; the Reformers of the English Church intended them to be sung, as is evident from the preface to the Prayer Book, and from the manner in which each verse is *pointed* or divided by a colon; so why should we not sing, that is to say, *chant* them?

B. It does not seem so *natural* to sing prose as it is to sing verse.

F. Not so *usual*, I grant, which is one great advantage, because chanting being confined to the Church, can never remind you of the modes of singing that are common in concert rooms. But certainly it is much more natural, if we call a thing more natural which is less artificial, because we need only take the words as they stand in the prose version, without turning them into metre and rhyme.

B. But chanting is not so *congregational* as singing the psalms in metre.

F. Quite the reverse, I assure you; the daily Psalms are intended to be, and ought to be, chanted by the whole congregation; and not only so, but the *verses* should be sung alternately by each side of

the congregation, a plan which produces the most agreeable feeling of mutual consent, of sociality, as it were.

B. Is it not a *difficult* kind of singing ?

F. Quite the contrary ; it is rather *recitation* than singing ; and the inflections or changes of voice are very few and very simple in all good chants ; all that is required is, that each verse of the psalm be recited distinctly in a musical tone, which tone is varied slightly at the middle and end of the verse.

B. Is there not a something *hurried and indecorous* in this manner of singing ?

F. You may by chance have heard chanting performed in a hurried and indecorous manner ; but the abuse is no argument against the use.

Mrs. B. I know the common idea to be, that when we want to praise God in a Psalm, we sing one of the Psalms in metre to a psalm-tune, and that the prose psalms are read for the edification of the people.

F. Can you find any ground for that opinion in the Bible or Prayer Book ?

B. One great argument against chanting is, that the *poor people cannot understand* the psalms when chanted so well as they can when sung. Suppose an ignorant man to go into a church whilst they are chanting the Psalms, he could not find out what was going on so well as if the Psalms were being plainly read.

F. The same argument might be brought with much greater force against the singing of metrical psalms ; in fact, it might be urged against all singing whatever. No doubt, as a matter of fact, a person cannot so plainly distinguish words that are sung, as those *that are merely read*. But if this is to have weight, *you must abolish all singing together*. You forget

that people who go to Church have Prayer Books, and are brought up to the use of them from their childhood, and surely any person who can read can follow the sense easily enough. Besides, I know from personal observation, that when people go regularly to a Church where the Psalms are chanted, they soon become used to it and like it, and join in it, too, as well as they can. But there is a newfangled custom in some churches where they do *not* chant the Psalms, which makes it much more difficult for your supposed ignoramus to take his share in the service. They have abolished the old parish clerk; the school children are not allowed to speak out, but they, as well as the congregation, use a polite whisper. So the clergyman preaches one verse of the Psalms, and the congregation whisper the next; and your poor ignorant man consequently loses every other verse.

B. Is not chanting Popish?

F. It is true the Romanists have the custom; but I am not aware that it is so connected with any erroneous doctrines, that we cannot have the one without the other. The simple question seems to be this: The Holy Ghost inspired the writers of Psalms to be sung with voice and instrument; the Church has given us a portion of them for every morning and evening in the month; common sense shows that psalms are meant to be sung; so why should we refrain from doing what Holy Scripture, the Church, and common sense dictate, merely because Romanists do the same?

B. I saw in a religious newspaper the other day, that chanting is an "unwarrantable departure from the simplicity of the forms established by long usage in our parochial churches."

F. I recollect the time, Mr. Bray, when you used



to talk about the necessity of Church Reform ; about the abuses of the Establishment ; the corruptions, the sinecures, and so forth. Therefore, I must say that *long usage* is an odd plea for a zealous Reformer to bring in favour of not doing a thing as it ought to be done. If the people were so poor and so ignorant that the psalms could not be chanted, reading them would be excusable enough ; but now that education, and wealth, and good taste have made such progress, and everybody is taught to read, and everybody, thanks to Mr. Hullah, can easily and cheaply be taught to sing, the reading a thing meant to be sung is evidently a piece of idle formality.

Mrs. B. I am afraid that you want to make the service *attractive*, to draw people to church to hear good music.

F. The setting forth the glory of God is *the* object. If that is borne in view, of course the musical part of Divine service will be cared for and rendered as worthy of Him as possible. That some people may come to church merely to please their ears is very likely ; but if the one great object of Divine worship is steadily regarded, such considerations will be felt unworthy of notice. Besides, the real old Church music is not a thing to please mere listeners. Join in it heartily, and you feel its beauty. But if people go as listeners merely, they cannot endure Tallis, or Byrd, or Palestrina, but want the showy theatrical solos of modern composers.

Mrs. B. However easy chanting may be to people who know how to do it, yet it requires some teaching?

F. Such singing as God requires needs none of man's teaching, even though it may be bettered by it.

B. Then it would be such an expense to have a good *choral service in every church*.

F. We will leave these points, if you please, for future discussion; but if people were agreed that the Psalms ought to be chanted, there would be no difficulty in finding the means.

B. Is there not such a thing as *antiphonal* chanting? I have read of it in a country newspaper as something highly objectionable.

F. I believe it did happen that an innocent country parson was accused of *antiphonal chanting* by some farmers who had unluckily confounded it with *auricular confession*. But it makes one feel ashamed to have to defend such a thing. It is that way of singing in which there are two sets of singers (such as a congregation divided by the middle aisle of a church), who sing by turns, answering each other, so to say, and then joining in full chorus. Why, the common parson-and-clerk way of reading the Psalms is one vestige of this custom; and so are the responses, in which the minister says one-half of a verse, and the people the other. But since this custom is so universally noticed in the Bible,—(look at the Song of Miriam, for instance, after the passage of the Red Sea; the song of the Jewish maidens after David had slain Goliath; the magnificent services at the reconsecration of the city and temple of Jerusalem after the captivity, recorded by Ezra and Nehemiah, who state that this mode of singing was appointed by King David himself; not to mention the antiphonal singing of the *Sanctus* by angels in heaven, of which the Prophet Isaiah speaks,)—and since it has always been used in the Christian Church from the earliest times, I think we may fairly defy people who pretend to reverence the Scriptures, and to imitate the simplicity of Primitive worship, to tell us any good grounds for objecting to it. Now to finish the subject, let me read you a short passage

from Dr. COMBER's *Companion to the Temple*, and pray notice what he says of the social congregational nature of chanting, especially if the priest, according to good old custom, begins the Psalm himself; and of the duty of the people to be something more than mere listeners; and I will give you a copy of *Law's Serious Call* (a book of which the great Dr. Johnson spoke in the highest terms), and ask you to read his plain common sense statement on the use of chanting.

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#### DR. COMBER ON CHANTING THE PSALMS.\*

"*O come let us sing*," &c. We being now about to besiege heaven with our prayers, every man shows his own forwardness, and reproves his neighbour's backwardness, with "*O come let us sing*." This is that which we are commanded to do by the Apostle, whenever we meet in the house of God, viz., to *admonish one another*, (Heb. x. 25,) *in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs*, (Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 15,) and to encourage one another, as the minister and people do most pathetically in this psalm, stirring up each other's hearts in these two first verses to praise God; the same thing after the poetic manner being expressed in divers words; from which it appears that this psalm was fitted for the two sides of the choir, and so we still use it. The priest beginning the exhortation "*O come let us sing*," and the people answering "*Let us come*," &c., thereby approving the advice and returning the courteous invitation, both minister and people do mutually press the duty, and express their joint resolutions to glorify God. In private it may suffice that our *heart and spirit* do rejoice; but we are now in public, and therefore as God both bestowed his favours

\* This passage is extracted from a running commentary on the 95th Psalm, and its uses as an *invitatory* Psalm.—Vide DEAN COMBER's *Companion to the Temple*.

(1 Cor. vi. 20) on both soul and body, we must (both in heart and voice) glorify him by both. We must sing his praises, and thereby shew even to men who cannot see the heart, that we are glad and rejoice in remembering his goodness. We must not stand mute, but our tongues must affect our hearts, and the hearts of all about us; that every man's light may shine clearly, and our neighbour's torch be kindled at our fire, till the several sparks of gratitude that lie hid in single hearts be blown up and united into one flame, bright as the blaze of the altar; and till we be turned into holy joy and love, which will be the effect of our zealous performing the outward part."

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#### FROM LAW'S "SERIOUS CALL."

"There is one thing cannot be neglected without great prejudice to your devotions: and that is, to begin all your prayers with a psalm.

"I do not mean that you should *read* over a psalm, but that you should *chant* or *sing* one of those psalms which we commonly call the *reading* psalms. For *singing* is as much the *proper* use of a psalm as *devout supplication* is the *proper* use of a *form* of prayer: and a psalm only *read* is very much like a prayer that is only looked over.

"Now the method of *chanting* a psalm, such as is used in the colleges in the *universities*, and in *some Churches*, is such as all persons are capable of. The change of the voice in thus *chanting* of a psalm, is so small and natural, that every body is able to do it, and yet sufficient to raise and keep up the gladness of our hearts.

"The difference between singing and reading a psalm will easily be understood, if you consider the difference between reading and singing a *common song* that you like. Whilst you only read it, you only like it, and that is all; but as soon as you sing it, then you *enjoy it*. You feel the delight of it; it has got hold

of you, your passions keep pace with it, and you feel the *same spirit* within you that seems to be in the words.

“If you were to tell a person who has such a song, that he need not *sing* it, that it was sufficient to *peruse* it, he would wonder what you meant; and would think you as absurd as if you were to tell him that he should only *look* at his *food*, to see whether it was good, but need not eat it: for a song of praise not sung, is very like any other good thing not made use of.”—LAW’S *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*.

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#### FROM THE “REFORMATIO LEGUM.”

This is a body of suggestions for the reform of Ecclesiastical Law, drawn up by Cranmer and other Commissioners, in the reigns of Henry the Eighth and Edward the Sixth, and is of great value in determining the intentions of the Reformers. In the chapter *De Sacrarum lectionum pronuntiatione et Psalmorum cantu*, after urging the necessity of a distinct utterance, and plain melody, so that the people may understand; it proceeds thus: “The hearers likewise should be engaged, together with the clerks and ministers, in singing certain portions of the divine offices, especially the Psalms, the Creed, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and the Ten Commandments; for by such pious exercises the people will be excited, and will have some real feeling of prayer; whereas, if they play the part of listeners only, the mind is so cold and torpid, that it can entertain no serious and intense thoughts concerning things Divine.”—*Day’s Edition*, 4to, 1571, p. 43.

## CONVERSATION V.

On Chanting the Responses ; the *loud voice* of Minister, Clerks, and People.

MR. FELIX. Let us to-day, if you please, talk of the *responses*, that is to say, of those portions of the service which the people are intended to say aloud, in turn with the minister. Let us fairly consider, whether or not they ought to be chanted.

Mrs. B. You know I have been brought up under the good old system ; never being accustomed to anything but the common mode of performing the service in our parish church ; and if ever I went to a cathedral, the whole affair seemed an unintelligible form—a mystery, and as I candidly confess, I always thought it a relic of Popery. However, I can now see the reason of chanting the psalms ; but as to chanting the responses, there is nothing so repugnant to the tastes of all steady church-goers of the old sort.

F. Pray tell me why.

Mrs. B. Why it seems entirely to upset all the notions that one has been gathering for so many years about the primitive purity, and chaste simplicity, and quiet sobriety of our Protestant service. When the old parish clerk says the *Amen*, or makes the response, then there is a quietness and plainness about the service that I like, and have been used to all my life ; but when there is a choir, as at the new church at —, *that chants the responses*, and when one hears

all the people around one chanting them too, all the boasted quietness and simplicity vanishes at once.

F. If by simplicity you mean silence, you must admit the whole letter and spirit of the Prayer Book to be against you. But I suppose the case is that you as a representative of what you call steady, old-fashioned church-goers, do not find the chanting of the responses agreeable to your feelings and habits.

B. Certainly not.

F. But since habits may be bad, and feelings perverted, let us argue the case on the ground of reason. If a practice is good, and useful, and reasonable, ought we to give it up because of our *feelings*?

B. Its reasonableness and use, then, is what you have to prove.

F. You must confess, that if you look at the Prayer Book—if you look at it critically, just as if you were a perfect stranger to its contents, and unaccustomed to any particular way of using it—you would see at once that some parts of it are quite as much intended to be said aloud by the people as the great portion of it is by the minister. But you must also confess, that the saying aloud by the people is a very rare thing to hear, although, as we observed in a former conversation, if they do *not* say aloud, the service is a mere piece of empty formality; for it is nonsense for a person to look at a book, and read the words "*our mouth shall shew forth Thy praise,*" unless he really does mean to open his own mouth. And I am sure that many people who sit silently in church, would be very glad to join in the response if they could do so in the way that *nature* dictates, that is to say, in a chant.

B. *Nature* dictate chanting! that seems a very *strange doctrine*.

F. It would be almost worth while to have a conversation some day about the meaning of the word *nature*, and to consider what is natural and what is not, to man in his present condition; but for the present let us state our case thus:—People go to church, and intend fairly to join in the responses: but in practice they do not. I argue that they do not, because the present way of attempting to say them in unmusical tones is *unnatural*, and that they might easily do so if they were said in a musical tone or chant, because that is natural.

B. I should like to have this point made a little clearer.

F. You want to have in a church the voices of all the people saying the same words at the same time. Now if they attempt to do this in unmusical tones, see what difficulties are in the way. Each man hears his neighbours around him, speaking each in his own time, and his own tone; the discord of sound and confusion of sense are intolerable to any one's ear; they weary you, and you leave off speaking, hardly conscious why, although you will readily feel the reason, if you attend to your sensations. Then, as Mr. Hullah has shewn, when people are speaking in the same musical tone, although every one is conscious that he is speaking, yet he scarcely hears his own voice; it is lost in the general body of sound. But when speaking in unmusical tones, every man's voice sounds prominently and individually, so that he fancies himself conspicuous, and thinks he is attracting the attention of his neighbours, and so he is silent from a feeling of shyness.\* For one or both of these reasons it is, that many well-disposed persons in church begin and

\* See Mr. Hullah's Lecture delivered at Leeds, "On the Duty and Advantage of Learning to Sing."



attempt to make the response aloud ; but there is felt to be something unnatural and irksome—they can hardly tell what, but yet there is a something that takes away their zeal, and gradually seals their lips ; and so they remain quiet, and you only hear the voice of the parish clerk and the charity children ; who, by-the-way, always speak in a kind of chant.

B. So you would induce people to chant, in order to enable their voices to blend nicely together. But in so solemn a thing as an address to the Divine Being, ought they not to be left to follow their own impulse ? Does it not detract from devotional feeling, if they have to consider the mode in which they say their prayers ?

F. The real state of the case I believe to be, that if a mass of people speaking together, and under strong religious impressions, follow the dictates of nature, they will speak in the same time and tone, that is to say, will chant. Their ears will induce them to do so ; their feeling of fellowship will also induce them. Look into common life, and you invariably find that when people are *speaking out*, they abandon that prosy tone of voice which we consider so natural. Children at play : sailors singing to each other during their work : the cries in the streets—these are vulgar instances ; but their very vulgarity is a proof that they spring from universal and natural causes. Thus, then, I think we may fairly contend, that if we consider the responses in the Church service merely as certain words to be said by a mass of people together, it is most natural and reasonable that they should be said in a musical tone, or chant ; and if most natural, then also this must be the most likely means of *inducing people to speak aloud in church as they ought to do.*

Mrs. B. You seem to consider the subject merely in a practical light; just as if all you wanted was to induce persons to speak out in church.

F. I waive the religious part of the question for the present; but my argument is to show how persons can be most easily and naturally enabled to join in the Church service, supposing them to be actuated by sufficient religious feeling, to make them desirous of doing so in spirit as well as in form.

B. You also have to show that it is proper or devotional to chant prayers in any shape.

F. At present our concern is only with what are popularly called the responses; that is, with those short sentences which the people ought to utter aloud in turn with the minister. If you grant that they ought to be said aloud by the entire congregation, you cannot help granting that the congregation ought to chant them; because chanting is the most easy and natural mode in which a number of persons can speak together. Then if you raise objections on other grounds against chanting these particular words, it will suffice to reply, that they are for the most part portions of Psalms; in fact, they are the living representatives of one of the most ancient forms of psalmody, in which the priest sung one-half of the verse, and the people the remainder. So that, although for the present you may not be able to see the reason of singing prayers, yet you cannot object to singing those small portions of Psalms which are interspered through the Prayer Book, and which when rightly used, are the sources of such admirable interest.

B. I dare say it would be a grand thing if a whole congregation were to chant the responses after the minister; but how is such a thing to be attained *now-a-days*?

F. It may be done, if people are first of all imbued with right religious principles, and then are taught to follow out the rules laid down in their Prayer Books; but there will be a good deal to do and to undo before such a thing could become general, for even the internal arrangements of many churches are altered in compliance with dissenting notions, so as to impede the celebration of the Liturgy, according to its own spirit.

B. In what points do you mean?

F. Our prayers are intended to be joined in audibly in certain parts by all the congregation present; the prayer in dissenting chapels is delivered *extempore* by the minister, and the people of course can only listen, and join mentally. Our minister has to say prayers *with us*, and in turns with us *to Almighty God*, and therefore according to old custom was placed at a desk on one side, not much elevated above us. The dissenting minister, on the contrary, who has to say a prayer unheard before, entirely by himself, is naturally put into a high pulpit, so that he may be audible all over the meeting-house. But when our service had degenerated, and the people had ceased to say aloud their part of it, and had become mere listeners, and began to talk of their clergyman *reading prayers to them*, then of course the clergyman was removed from the modest old reading-desk, and an elephantine mass of wood was erected in the middle of the church, and divided into three pulpits; the sermon was preached from the uppermost; the prayers were *read to the people* from the middle one; and the parish clerk read the responses (also *to the people*) from the lowest, the congregation meanwhile sitting as silent listeners. A *choir put into a gallery to sing to the people* completed the arrangement, which as common sense must shew,

is entirely subversive of the idea of a *common prayer*, and of congregational singing. The next time we meet, we will, if you please, pursue the subject. Now we will conclude as usual, with a passage out of Bishop Wetenhall, who is a most valuable witness of the practices of the Church just after the Restoration of King Charles the Second.

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#### BISHOP WETENHALL ON CHANTING PRAYERS.

“Let us speak something touching singing of prayers, for that this some have prejudice against in our Church. Now they who say it is improper to sing prayers, must, if they will stand to that assertion, lay aside the singing of most of the Psalms, for they are not only all over full of petitions, but some of them in their very titles called prayers. (Ps. xvii., *a prayer of David*; Ps. xxxvi. and xc., *a prayer of Moses the man of God*; Ps. cii., *a prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord*; Ps. cxlii., *Maschil of David*; *a prayer when he was in the cave*.) Yet it is certain all these were both musically penned (designed therefore by the Holy Ghost to be sung), and have been all along, as well as at present they are, sung by all sorts of Christians. They, therefore, who are for such a reformation as shall take away all singing of prayer, must reform Scripture, as well as the Catholic practice of the Church, in all ages. But let us consider how small a portion of our prayers are sung. All our collects and such like prayers are only read in a plain, distinct, and audible voice; if there be any variation of a note in the close of the prayer, for the retaining and exciting the attention of the people, that all may be ready to give their Amen, this is as much as is, and 'tis no more than needful for the reasons insinuated. But let those who reprehend this, consider how impossible almost it is frequently to repeat any form of words

but we shall insensibly and of our own accord fall into some tone ; and I wish our severest censurers, though they use no form of prayers, were not generally fallen into more affected, uncouth, and ungainly toning, than any used in our quires. Now, if the Church, to prevent all drawling and indecent tones (which we are aptest too to fall in in the close of sentences), hath brought in the use of such regular and easy variation of accent rather than singing, who shall charge her with imprudence ? Or rather, who ought not to commend her care ? This, therefore, not well bearing the name of singing, the only prayers amongst us which any can say that we sing, are the Versicles and Responsory Petitions in the daily Morning and Evening office, in the Litany, and in the Communion Service. These are generally modulated in a very plain way ; and at more solemn seasons, sometimes sung after the newer figurate mode. Now if prayers may be sung, why not these ? which are many of them verses taken out of the Psalms, and the rest of them concise sentences resembling the Psalmick verses. Not to mention the gratefulness of this variety in the manner of prayer (which in so long offices to vulgar spirits is not unnecessary), I must profess sincerely, as to myself, this modulate way many times quickens and calls in my attention, and draws out, and, as it were, lengthens the devout breathings of my soul. I speak it not in vanity, but in the fear of God, and for the good of others ; and I doubt not but there are thousands who frequent our quires that can say the same. I will conclude all I shall say touching the singing of prayers with the judgment of Mr. Calvin herein. 'Truly,' saith he, 'if singing be accommodated to that gravity which becomes the sight of God and angels' (and such we may safely say our singing is), 'it not only gains much grace and veneration to holy performances, but is of very great force to stir up men's minds—to recall fervour and attention in prayer.' In the judgment, then, of Mr. Calvin (however much his present followers swerve from it), singing is so far from being *unbecoming in the office of prayer*, that it is a help

to its devouter performance."—Bp. WETENHALL on *Gifts and Offices*.

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### ON RESPONSIVE PRAYER.

From the *Edinburgh Review*, April 1852.

"Nor did Calvin differ from Luther as to the propriety of formal prayer; for whatever we may think of the meagre and stunted services which he substituted for those sublime forms in which the devotional feelings of a thousand years had found expression, we must at all events regard it as a recognition of the principle. The "*fine responsoria*," which Luther so carefully preserved, were as carefully excluded by the less poetical Frenchman; and we cannot but think that with them not only was much of the beauty of holiness banished from the sanctuary, but the people deprived of one of the most efficacious excitements toward participating with life and spirit in the services:" p. 468.

## CONVERSATION VI.

On Chanting the Prayers; its antiquity, universality, and naturalness.

Mrs. B. It is so long since we held one of our quiet discussions on the Choral Service, that I must really trouble you to go back a little, so that we may get a clear view of the argument from the beginning.

F. Well then. We find in existence two modes of celebrating the English Ritual: one used in most parish churches; the other in cathedral and collegiate churches. In the one the service is read in the common colloquial tone of voice used in common life; in the other it is sung. You affirm the former of these ways to be the right one, and the latter, or *choral mode*, to be a superfluous and superstitious kind of ornament engrafted upon it, or rather a popish abuse not cleared away at the Reformation. I, on the contrary, hold that the *choral* is the legitimate and perfect mode of celebrating Divine service; and that the other is but a degradation, which has crept in through carelessness, or poverty, or loss of correct principles. The way, as I before said, to arrive at the truth, is to go back to first principles, as laid down by the sound writers whom I have quoted—to look at the object and idea of public worship, and to study the construction of the Common Prayer Book. What do we go to church for? To be pleased—to be edified—“to sit under” a minister? Certainly not; but princi-

pally to praise God and to pray to him. Singly ? No ; but in common with the priest and with our brethren. In any order we choose ? No ; but under the guidance of the priest, and according to the forms provided by the Church in the Prayer Book. If then, we *are* to praise God, reason and nature will teach us not to *read* our psalms instead of singing them—if we are to pray to God in one common voice with our fellow-worshippers, reason and nature teach us to use the same tone or chant, if only to avoid confusion and discord of sounds. And I hope to prove to you that reason and nature also justify the use of that elevated, carefully regulated tone or chant in which, according to ancient usage, the service should be said or sung by the minister.

B. Where will you begin ?

F. Where we left off last ; namely, at the versicles and responses, which, if you recollect, are verses of psalms, of which one part is said by the priest, the other by the people. Now, if psalms are meant to be sung, and if, as we showed in our last conversation, there are many good reasons why the people should sing or chant their half of each verse, why should not the priest chant his portion ?

B. That is an ingenious way of getting in the point of the wedge. But only a small portion of the liturgy is composed of these versicles, and we want some reason for the use of the chant in the collects and prayers, which are not portions of psalms.

F. In arguing such a point, we may take either of these two grounds.—We may appeal to *authority* ; that such a custom has the sanction of Holy Scripture, that it was constantly adopted by the universal Church, and that it is lawfully authorized by our own Church : or we may take the ground of *reason* ; and



show its own intrinsic reasonableness and utility, independent of all authority and custom.

B. It is only on the ground of pure reason that I can agree to anything ; now-a-days we don't care much for authority and ancient custom.

F. But you forget, my dear Mr. Bray, that if we can prove any practice to have existed from the earliest times, to be very widely spread, and to have been adopted by sects or nations who differ from each other on other points ; that this very antiquity and custom are presumptions, *à priori*, that this custom is *natural*—is based on some reason or other. Now any reasonable man will see that the custom of chanting prayers has all these marks. For the proof of its antiquity, look at the Jews. It is not to be supposed that they would have borrowed from the Christians, yet if you go into one of their synagogues on the Sabbath, you hear the prayers, responses, and lessons out of the Scripture chanted to a kind of music most strangely like the earliest specimens we have of Christian music. Hear what a Jewish writer says—

“ Recitative was in general use in the earliest patriarchal times of the Jews ; it was then, and still is, materially connected with their religious ceremonies. Every word of prayer offered to the Deity, whether in their private or public devotion, is given in a kind of chant, which, although it may not come under the exact character of legitimate recitative, still bears the sound of song. So essential do they consider melody of voice towards rendering their prayers acceptable to God, and for increasing the force and energy of language, that when a boy is taken to learn *Gemarrah*, the first question of the Rabbi to the parent is, has the boy a good tone ? and he considers that the greatest *compliment* is paid to his pupil when it is said he *reads with proper tone*.

"The Hebrews chant with peculiar pathos and effect, in style of recitative, the whole of the Bible, after the manner it was delivered to them from the mouth of Moses, as it is supposed he received it on Mount Sinai."

Then look at the Mohammedans; the best account of whose religious ceremonies is to be found in Mr. Lane's *Modern Egyptians*. In their prayers, in the reading of the Koran, in the morning cries of their muezzin from the minarets, that "*prayer is better than sleep*," they always use the chant. Then come down to the separation of the Greek Church from the Latin—you find the chant retained by both. And, lastly, examine the Reformation of the English Church, and you will find the chant retained by the authority of her Reformers. So I argue, that since the English differ so widely on many most vital points from the Romanists, the Romanists from the Greeks, the Christians from Jews, and the Mohammedans from both, it is, in the nature of things, most improbable that each and all of these should have retained this custom, unless for some good and natural reason. And that reason seems to be this—that whatever is offered to Almighty God ought to be the best of its kind; that the tone of voice used in God's house ought not to be of that dull, prosaic sort, with imperfect and irregular inflections, which we use in common speech; but that, whether in addressing the people in God's name, or in reading His Word, or in offering prayer to Him, it ought to be of that clear, elevated character which bespeaks earnestness of purpose, and to have all its cadences and inflexions regulated in the manner most conducive to solemnity and devotion.

B. But, my dear Sir, the thing is gone out; people don't understand it; it seems now to go quite against

the grain; so why seek to revive a practice which might have been congenial to the feelings of people a thousand years ago, but certainly now creates only repugnance and prejudices?

F. The thing is not *gone out*, as you suppose. It is *too natural* to be abandoned entirely. For, as both Dr. Bisse and Bishop Wetenhall remark, it is impossible to repeat the same words frequently, without falling into some habitual tune or chant. *Every man reads in a tune*; our parish clerk, who thinks his reading, no doubt, the very perfection of speech, would be astounded if I showed him on paper the interval of a *fourth* which he always rises at the beginning of a sentence, and the *minor third* he regularly drops at the end. Dissenters almost invariably used a high-pitched tone of voice, and regular inflection, which is much more like singing than common speaking. Who then, as Bishop Wetenhall says, would not commend the care of the Church in providing a solemn and regular order, even in these apparently unimportant particulars?

B. But till within these few years the custom had almost died out in our Church.

F. And its revival is but a mark of that increased reverence with which everything connected with the Church is now happily treated. So soon as the truth is made out, that people are not to go to church once a week merely, to be edified, but that they ought to go there often, to praise God and pray, then our incomparable liturgy is no longer coldly slurred over, but Nature herself teaches that the form should be used with the right spirit; that psalms ought to be sung, and that the tone of voice should accord with the solemnity of the place. Now I will leave the argument in Dr. Bisse's hands.

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## DR. BISSE ON THE ECCLESIASTICAL CHANT.

" Various are the reasons for this ancient usage of *singing*, as termed in the rubric, but in common appellation *chanting*, the public service.

" *First.* In general we Christians do hereby testify that the law of God is not troublesome or grievous, but pleasant and sweet; and that we keep it, not as servants with the spirit of fear, but as children with the spirit of love, even the love of David, who make also the *statutes* of God our song *in the house of our pilgrimage*.

" We acknowledge that all the faithful under the law were of the same family, of the same household of faith with us Christians, though shut up under a darker and severer dispensation. But thence we argue, that if the worship under the *ministration of condemnation* were allowed to be joyous, much more may ours under the *ministration of righteousness* exceed in joy.

" *Secondly.* We Christians by this usage distinguish our worship from that of the *Gentiles*, by the cheerfulness of our voices, as well as of our behaviour.

" As to the behaviour of the primitive Christians, the manner was, as Tertullian describes in his *Apology*, c. 30, to pray with their hands stretched out, and their heads uncovered; by their open hands protesting their innocence, by their open countenance professing they were not ashamed; thereby taxing the *Gentiles*, whose custom at their public worship was to cover their hands and faces, which was a tacit acknowledgment of guilt in their hands, and shame in the face. Thus, as by the openness of demeanour, so by the cheerfulness of voice, testified in singing their prayers, they declared that they did not worship as men *without hope*, like the *Gentiles*, whose sacrifices were attended with dejection and despondency, with loud cryings and howlings; but that their worship was full of faith and hope, which are graces full of joy and consolation.

" *Thirdly.* This manner gives still a higher dignity, solemnity, and a kind or degree of sanctity to divine

worship, by separating it more, and setting it at a farther distance from all actions and interlocutions that are common and familiar ; chanting being a degree and advance in dignity above the distinct reading or saying used in the church, as that is and ought ever to be above that manner of reading or speaking which passes in common conversation and intercourse among men. For this reason, is not a peculiar and solemn manner of reading received into our courts of judicature, in our senates and synods ; thereby to give an awfulness and distinction to those public proceedings, by separating them from the condescensions and freedoms that are used in common transactions ?

“ *Fourthly.* Chanting the service is found more efficacious to awaken the attention, to stir up the affections, and to edify the understanding, than plain reading of it, though assisted by proper emphasis and graces of a well-governed pronunciation ; which effects, as they are wrought principally by the melody of the voice, so not a little by the very strength and loudness of it, which is known to have its force, and to attract the hearers. Now the voice may be much more raised, extended, or exerted in chanting, than is practicable in speaking. Yet some through unskilfulness in elocution, borrow a corrupt imitation of this manner, to strengthen their utterance in their assemblies, and assume a tone in their praying and preaching ; not considering, that in chanting, though this be natural and pleases, yet in speaking it becomes affected and offends ; and that chanting misunderstood and misapplied, falls under the appellation and censure of *canting*. So unhappily blind is prejudice, as to condemn that manner in our worship where it is in perfection ; and yet in their own, to take up with its corruption.”

## CONVERSATION VII.

On the Chant for the Prayers ; its authority in the English Church.

MRS. B. In our last conversation, you told us a great deal about the antiquity of the custom of chanting prayers, but now I should like to hear something about the authority for using it in our Church ; because, as I have said before, many people think it a superstitious custom that is barely tolerated, and not authorized.

F. When a Roman Catholic calls ours a new Religion, and asks where it was before Luther, what is the proper answer to give him ?

Mrs. B. Why, that ours is not a new religion, but the genuine old religion of the Apostles, purified from the corruptions which Rome engrafted upon it.

F. Exactly. And with the old religion, we have also the old Liturgy, the framework of which, as well as much of its very substance, have come down to us from the apostolic age ; and with the old Liturgy we wish to retain also that old way of using it, which is commonly called the chant, and which has likewise come down from the Apostles' days. The English Reformers did not make a new Church, and did not make a new Liturgy, though they purified both from much superstition ; neither did they abolish the old way of using the Liturgy, though that, too, they greatly purified and simplified. I argue, then, that

since the old musical way of celebrating divine service was not abolished by the English Reformers, that therefore there is full authority for it to the present day.

B. But taking the Prayer Book and Rubrics as they stand now, do you think they authorize it? Not a syllable can I find about chanting the prayers.

F. As for the word *chant*, that is quite a modern term, applied to the singing of such parts of the service as are not in metre, and used, amongst other things, to express that carefully regulated tone in which the prayers ought to be *said*. The *word* is of no consequence.

B. Well, but I can only find that the prayers are to be *said*, or *read*; and besides, there is a rubric which implies that even the Psalms are to be *read*; for instance, the rubric before *Venite exultemus* says, "Then shall be *said* or *sung* the Psalm following; except—on the nineteenth day of every month, when it is not to be *read* here, but in the ordinary course of the Psalms."

F. I know that this and other rubrics are quoted by some of the opponents of Church Music, under the idea that the words *read* and *say* are to be taken in their modern sense, and in contradistinction to *singing* or *chanting*. So let us go into the subject a little; and let us recollect that the only fair way to interpret these or any other directions is, to take them in the sense in which the framers of them meant them to be understood. Now look at the Prayer Book. We find the minister directed to *read* the introductory sentences; to *say* what is written after those sentences; and to *pronounce* the Absolution: the Lord's Prayer is to be *said*; *Venite* and *Te Deum* to be *said* or *sung*; *Gloria Patri* to be *repeated* after the Psalms;

the Lessons to be *read*; the Creed and Litany to be *sung* or *said*; the Psalms in the Burial Office to be *read*: and so on. But now, if we look a little more closely, we shall find that two or three of these terms are sometimes used in reference to one and the same thing. For instance, the rubric, which you have just quoted, which orders *Venite* to be *said* or *sung*, in the very next clause, says that it is to be *read*. Look, too, at the rubric before the Apostle's Creed. That says, "Then shall be sung or said the Apostle's Creed——except only on such days as the Creed of St. Athanasius is appointed to be *read*." But if you turn to the rubric before the Athanasian Creed itself you find it there ordered to be *sung* or *said*. So that the very same thing is ordered in one sentence to be *sung*, and in another to be *read*. Now as these directions cannot well be supposed to be contradictory one of another, the conclusion is irresistible, that the words *read* and *sing* are not used as opposites; but that *reading* may mean chanting, or singing, or *musical reading*, as it is expressly called by some old authors.

Do you want further proof of this? Then look at the rubric in this edition of the Prayer Book, *temp.* Queen Elizabeth. "Then shall be read two lessons distinctly with a loud voyce that the people may heare \* \* \* And to the end the people may the better heare, in such places where they doe sing, there shall the lessons be sung in a plaine tune after the manner of distinct reading; and likewise the Epistle and Gospel." Here you see the Lessons are ordered to be *sung*; but how? why, after the manner of distinct *reading*. Look, too, at Queen Elizabeth's Injunctions to the Clergy, issued in 1559. In these it is commanded that "a modest and distinct song be used in all parts of the Common



Prayer, in the Church." From these instances it is evident that the *singing* of the Lessons was considered one kind of *reading*; and that the mode of *saying* prayers was called a modest kind of *song*. Now when we consider further, that the terms *say* and *sing*, in reference to divine service, were in use in Acts of Parliament and elsewhere long before the Reformation, and that there was at that time an established way of saying or singing every part of divine service, the only inference to be drawn from the various terms used in the rubrics seems to be, that every part of the service was to be said, read, sung, rehearsed, recited, pronounced, or used, in the manner in which they were and always had been accustomed to be said, read, sung, and so forth.

B. It is a pity the directions seem so loose.

F. I deny that the directions are loose. When anything was to be said differently from the old way, it was specified exactly. Thus you find such Rubrics as these:—

"At the beginning of the Morning Prayer, the Minister shall read, with a loud voice, some one or more of these sentences of the Scriptures that follow."

"Then the Minister shall kneel and say the Lord's Prayer with an audible voice."

In the Elizabethan Prayer Book it stands thus: "Then shall the Minister *begin* the Lord's Prayer with a loud voice."

Now why, let me ask, should it be specified, that the Minister's voice is to be *loud* or *audible*? Certes, because before the Reformation it was the custom to begin the service with certain prayers in secret, and to say the *beginning* of the Lord's Prayer in an *inaudible* voice, it being only the last clause or two which

Priest and People said antiphonally, aloud. Moreover, you find the Rubric,

“After that, shall be said or sung, *in English*, the Hymn called Te Deum Laudamus.”

Why need specify that it is to be sung in English, except that heretofore it had been sung in Latin? So I contend that where a new way was introduced, the same was distinctly specified by a new Rubric; and that where the old established customs were to be followed, the old Rubrics were retained, with the old interpretation of them. “Then shall follow the Psalms:”—Can we believe that the men who penned this Rubric, could have dreamed of any way of using a psalm but singing it if possible? If the programme of a public dinner were to say, “Then will follow a song,” would there be any doubt as to singing that? No; the getters-up of convivial and political meetings are wise in *their* generation. They know how the subtle power of music can stir the feelings; and they use it, too: it is only churchmen that neglect it. No one dreams of coolly speaking or preaching a song, unless it be a psalm to God.

B. True, it seems an incongruity; but I suppose the Reformers discouraged Church Music for some good reason; lest it should lead to Popery and formality, or some reason of the kind.

F. Now let us take the opportunity of disposing, once for all, of the fiction that the English Reformers hated Church Music, or were indifferent to decent forms and observances. And the same facts and documents that serve for this purpose will shew also what must have been that manner of celebrating Divine Service which was meant by the words *say, sing, read*, and so forth. In the very commencement

of the English Reformation, in 1544, the Litany (which, by the way, was composed 1,300 years ago, purposely to be sung antiphonally by priest and people in processions) was no sooner translated into English, than it was set to a simple form of the old music, by Archbishop Cranmer. This was the first part of the Common Prayer Book that was used in the vulgar tongue, and the chant to which Cranmer set it has been used with it ever since to this day, and is now published in the *Parish Choir*. In the year 1550, the entire Prayer Book, including Versicles, Responses, Canticles, Collects, and Anathasian Creed, together with all parts of the Communion Office, including Creed, Offertory, *Sanctus*, *Gloria in Excelsis*, Collects, and Anthems; and the Burial Service also, were set to the old music, by John Merbecke; and I may observe that the Canticles and Responses published in the *Parish Choir* are taken from his book. That John Merbecke was an ardent reformer, as well as a most exemplary character in other respects, there is most abundant testimony to show. He was a profound student of Holy Scripture, to which he wrote out a Concordance with his own hand; and for this pious work he and some others were seized by the tyrannical Government of the day, and were condemned to be burned. His companions were actually burned, but Merbecke escaped through his good character and conduct; and to his honour be it said, he escaped without recanting his religious opinions, which he retained to the last, and many a bitter book did he write against Popery. He lived almost to the end of Elizabeth's reign, "singing merrily and playing on the organs," as his biographer expressly says. So here we find a zealous Reformer, *one who scarcely escaped the fire, who hated Popery,*

and had good reason to do so, but yet thought it no Popery to love the ancient Christian way of using our Apostolic Liturgy with music. In his book, of which I have just related the contents, he says expressly that therein "is conteyned so much of the Order of Common Praier as is to be sung in Churches," which includes everything now chanted and more. Passing over Mary's dismal reign, we find Queen Elizabeth, as soon as she came to the throne, issuing Injunctions both to the clergy and laity, by the authority of Parliament and with the advice of the Privy Council, one of which is so remarkable that I will presently read it at length; not merely because it shews that the *modest and distinct song* must have been then universally considered the common and orthodox way of saying prayers, but also because it shews the futility of the idea that the Choral Service was considered a thing *sui generis*, distinct from the *parochial* service, and confined to Collegiate and Cathedral Churches, as some late writers assume. On the contrary, this Injunction plainly implies that Parish Churches were to have the Choral Service whenever they could, and that, therefore, such Parish Choirs as had endowments were to retain them still. Thus, without referring to DAY's *Service Book*,\* to Tallis's works, or Farrant's, or any other of the illustrious chain of Church composers, or to the customs of Cathedrals (degenerate though they now be), the intention of the Reformers of the English Church as to the Choral Service is, I think, incontestably proved; and it is no fault of theirs, if their intentions have been neglected, or perverted, or denied, through the apathy and worldliness, and loose principles of later times.

\* Of which an account is given in *Parish Choir*, No. IV.

B. But if the Reformers were really not averse to Church Music, whence arose the impression that they were so?

F. Instead of Reformers, you ought to say Puritans. There were many men no doubt of great zeal and piety, who wished for such a violent change as should do away with all semblance of the old Church order, including the office of Bishops, and whose great object was to make everything as unlike Popery as possible, not caring whether they threw away good, so as they got rid of imagined evils. Whether we have not reason to be thankful that these men were resisted by the Government and the Bishops, and the more prudent Reformers, I will leave any one to say who knows what the present state of religion is in those parts of Europe where their views were fully carried out. But I will say, that I know nothing in the history of civilized man much more humiliating than the childish, peevish, frivolous objections that these Puritans—pious, zealous, and intelligent, as many of them were—used to raise against everything that was established by authority in the Church. Such were their objection to the alternate chanting of the Psalms—(or tossing the Psalms to and fro like a tennis-ball, as they said)—and their objections to playing on organs, on the plea that instrumental music was carnal, formal, Popish, and Judaical. And it is worthy of notice that such of the clergy as held Puritanical principles, though they hated the chanting of prayers, and other parts of the Church Service in its regular established order, yet would do the very same thing in another way; for they sung prayers, creeds, and even the ten commandments, after they had turned them into metre and rhyme. *If you want to know more of the Puritans, and their*

objections to our Liturgy, let me refer you to NEALE'S *History of the Puritans*, and you shall judge them by the words of their own mouths. I do not think we need say more on the legal or technical objections against the Choral Service.

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QUEEN ELIZABETH'S INJUNCTION RESPECTING  
CHOIRS AND CHURCH MUSIC.

"Item, Because in divers Collegiate, and some Parish Churches heretofore, there have been Livings appointed for the maintenance of men and children to use singing in the Church, by means whereof the laudable science of Musick hath been had in estimation, and preserved in knowledge: the Queen's Majesty neither meaning in any wise the decay of any thing that might conveniently tend to the use and continuance of the said science, neither to have the same in any part so abused in the Church, that thereby the Common-prayer should be the worse understood of the hearers, willeth and commandeth, that first no alterations be made of such assignments of Living, as heretofore hath been appointed to the use of singing or Musick in the Church, but that the same so remain. And that there be a modest and distinct song so used in all parts of the Common-prayers in the Church, that the same may be as plainly understood, as if it were read without singing, and yet nevertheless for the comforting of such as delight in Musick, it may be permitted, that in the beginning, or in the end of the Common-prayers, either at Morning or Evening, there may be sung an Hymn, or such like song to the praise of Almighty God in the best sort of melody and Music that may be conveniently devised, having respect that the sentence of the Hymn may be understood and perceived."

## CONVERSATION VIII.

On the authority for the Chant in the English Church, and on the meaning of the words "Say" and "Sing."

MRS. BRAY. I see plainly, Mr. Felix, that there is a great deal to be said and learned about the Common Prayer Book, that does not appear on the face of it at first sight. What you told us at our last meeting about the words *say*, and *sing*, and *read*, had certainly never struck me before.

MR. B. And there are many things which you tell us, which are so contrary to the notions which most of us were bred up to, that even if we were positively satisfied as to their truth, we could not receive them without some hesitation. Now I used to agree entirely with my friend Mumble, the churchwarden of St. Boniface's; and he, you know, at the time when there were those great disputes about the Surplice and the chanting of the Psalms, quite carried the vestry with him, against the parson, and gained the day by quoting that passage in the Prayer Book about the *Venite*, which says, "on the 19th day of every month it is not to be *read* here, but in the ordinary course of the Psalms." This shows, said he, that the Psalms are meant to be read, and that the chanting of them is Popish; for if the Reformers *had* meant them to be chanted, they would not have *said they were to be read*; and nobody that was a

true Protestant could maintain that reading meant chanting, only a Jesuit could say that.

Mrs. B. Yes, and when little Tom Cox, the singing boy at St. Boniface's, died, and the clergyman wanted to have the Psalms chanted at his funeral, Mumble agitated the vestry, and quoted the Rubric, "after they are come into the Church, shall be *read* one or both of these Psalms following;" and so he said that he was Churchwarden and had to pay the organist, and that he would not let the organ be used for such a purpose, and threatened to stop the service if they attempted it.

B. But Mumble got into a scrape there, for when he went to his lawyer to talk the thing over, he found that all these questions had been decided at law against him; and his lawyer referred him to a judgment of Lord Stowell's (he was then Sir W. Scott, Lord Eldon's elder brother, Judge of the Consistory Court of London), which made him draw in his horns.

F. The only way to settle this question honestly, is, as I said when we met last, to find out, not what *we* mean by the words *say* or *read*, but what did those persons mean who compiled the Rubrics of the Common Prayer Book. Because, words vary in their meaning, in the course of time. Sometimes, they get a meaning quite opposite to what they had at first; and so to get at the truth we must go back a little. You recollect that at our last meeting I showed you, and you could not deny, that the terms *read*, *say*, and *sing*, are used almost indiscriminately in the Prayer Book; so that one and the same thing—the Athanasian Creed, for example—is ordered to be *read* in one place, and to be *said* or *sung* in another. Now either these Rubrics contradict each other, which is hardly *credible*, or else they agree; and if they agree, why



then the words *say* and *read* are not to be understood in their modern sense as opposites to singing, but they are to be understood as implying or allowing a musical way of saying and reading; in other words, chanting.

Mrs. B. But have you a right to take it for granted that the Rubrics are not contradictory?

F. If you assert the Rubrics to be contradictory, then you must look at history, custom, and other sources, to find out which of the two contradictory meanings is the right one. But I think I can show you that they are not contradictory.

Mrs. B. May it not have been the intention of the Reformers that the Psalms should have been plainly read? and may not the words sing or say have been left by accident?

F. When you talk of the Reformers, you forget that the Prayer Book was most carefully revised in Charles the Second's time, a hundred years after the Reformation; and that if there had been any oversight of the kind in earlier editions, it could hardly have escaped revision then. Moreover, if you recollect, I told you, that although it is quite true that the word *read* now-a-days, does generally mean *not to sing*, yet, that it used to signify, a musical reading or chanting. For example, Bingham, a most learned writer on ecclesiastical antiquities, in describing the ancient Church Chant as regulated by St. Athanasius, at Alexandria, in the fourth century, says, "that it was not much different from reading, and much resembling the musical way of reading the Psalms now in our Cathedral Churches." Bingham died in 1723, so that you see more than half a century after the last revision of the Prayer Book, the word *read* was employed to denote chanting.

B. I find in the Prayer Book the words *read* and *say*. You say that they *may* mean musical reading and saying; or, at all events, that they do not prohibit musical reading, and that chanting was called musical reading in 1723. But you have got to prove that these words, *read* and *say*, were actually used in a musical sense, at the time of the Reformation, when the Rubrics were compiled.

F. That I can easily do. We have only to look at the Latin Service Book of the unreformed Church, from which our reformed Common Prayer Book was taken.

B. Stay, stay; if we are to go to Latin Service Books for the Choral Service, I shall think that Mumble is right after all, and that the whole thing is Popish.

F. No, my dear sir; I go to no book for the Choral Service but the Common Prayer Book of the Church of England. That is my authority. But you challenge me to prove that the words *read* and *say*, which are used in the Prayer Book, were used in a musical sense at the time of the Reformation. How can I do this, unless you allow me to go to the books that were used down to the time of the Reformation?

Mrs. B. But all this quite frightens me. I feel a kind of horror when you talk of Latin Service Books. I was always taught that our Common Prayer Book was composed by our pious Reformers; but to pretend to look for its origin in anything Latin, is quite frightful.

F. Please to recollect that the Reformers did not make a new Church, but reformed an old one; they did not compose a new Service Book, but reformed an old one; the old Latin Service books contain good metal alloyed with dross and tinsel; they threw away

the dross, and they kept the bright metal, and gave it us in our Prayer Book. They did not invent a new Ritual, nor a new way of celebrating it: neither did they invent new terms. They purged away whatever was blasphemous and superstitious, and let the people have a Common Prayer in English to join in, instead of letting them be spectators of the devotion of priests and monks in Latin; but they took prayer and litany, psalm, anthem, and suffrage, added to them, and improved them, and left them to be celebrated as they had been for ages. They translated the terms from Latin into English, but they did not alter the old terms nor invent new ones. There was an established mode of saying, singing, and reading every part of Divine Service, before the Reformation, and that mode was continued, with the same terms to denote it, after the Reformation.

Mrs. B. I dare say you are right; but I have quite a horror of Latin. I really don't like to go groping into Monkish Service Books, to explain our Rubrics.

F. Whoever looks steadily for the truth, will never lose his way, even in a Monkish Service Book. They that hold the truth need never fear inquiry. It is quite a Popish way of going to work to prohibit looking at any matter of fact, lest it should damage your cause. It is a matter of fact, that in the English Church up to 1549, or thereabouts, the service was in Latin. It is a matter of fact, that after that year it was said in English. I only want to compare the Latin and the English to find out the right meaning of one or two words. Now here is a Romish Service Book containing the service for Christmas day, in Latin; let us look at it. And to shew you *the use of* such a look I will ask you why it is, that *you find in the Prayer Book* that the minister is

to read, at the beginning of Morning and Evening Prayer, certain sentences with a *loud voice*. Then again, look at the Rubrics,

“Then the Minister shall kneel and say the Lord’s Prayer with an *audible voice* ;”

“Then the Minister, clerks, and people, shall say the Lord’s Prayer with a *loud voice* :”

Now tell me why such stress is laid on the direction to use a *loud* or *audible* voice ?

B. That has puzzled me. I really can’t say.

F. Now look at this Latin book, and you will see. In the Romish book, at the beginning of Service, the Lord’s Prayer is ordered to be said *secretly* ; and so it is wherever else it occurs. *Ante Matutinum dicitur secreto, Pater Noster*. Thus you observe, that at the time the Prayer Book was compiled, there were two kinds of voice used in Public Worship. The *secret*, a kind of whispering ; and the *loud voice* : and hence the reason, why the term *loud voice* is used in the English Prayer Book. It was in contra-distinction to *secret voice*, which was also then in use. Now you recollect that *dicere*, *legere*, and *cantare*, are the Latin for *say*, *read*, and *sing*.

B. I have been a long while from school, and my Latin is quite rusty ; but I’ll endeavour to follow you.

F. Next let me shew you what the *loud voice* was. The Matin Service began thus : “ *Ante Matutinum dicitur secreto, Pater Noster*.” “Before Matins, is said *secretly* the Lord’s Prayer,” “ *Deinde clara voce dicitur*,” “then is said with a loud voice, *Domine, labia mea aperies*.” “O Lord, open thou my lips.” Now in this passage, we have the word *dicitur* used twice ; first, to denote the private saying of the Lord’s Prayer in *secret* ; then to denote the open saying of



Veni Redemptor gentium; et *canit* dexter chorus primum versum, et sinister secundum." "Afterwards is *said* the hymn *Come Redeemer of the Nations*, and the right side of the choir *sings* the first verse, and the left side the second."

I could go on for ever multiplying such quotations.\* But I think I have proved my point, which is this; viz., that the words *read* and *say* are used in our Prayer Book, precisely as they were in the Latin Service Books of the unreformed Church; that they are constantly applied to parts of the Service which are read or said musically; and consequently, that when applied to parts which it is reasonable or customary to read or say musically, they afford no prohibition whatever to their being so read or said.

Mrs. B. Well, Mr. Felix, although I am a woman, I have carried your argument in my head clearly enough to see that you have only shown that the words *read* and *say*, do not prohibit chanting. But please to recollect, that you promised to give us both positive authority for the choral service, and also proof of its reasonableness. You have now shown that certain words commonly taken to be a prohibition, are not prohibitory, but we yet want positive authority.

F. The first positive authority I will give you, is the use of the very words *say* or *sing*, the latter of which plainly means chanting. These words could

\* The passage from Pliny's letter, where he says of the ancient Christians that they *say* a hymn to Christ by turns; "*carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem*;" the passage from Horace, "*Nos cantabimus invicem Neptunum . . Dicetur merita Nox quoque nenia*;"—"Doctus et Phœbi chorus et Dianæ *dicere* laudes;" quite prove the point that the word *say* was used in a musical sense, both by classical Latin authors, and in the service books of the Church before the Reformation.

not have been retained in the Prayer Book unless chanting were intended to be legalized. The second proof is custom. In the churches and chapels which were intended to set perfect examples to others, namely, in the Royal Chapels and Cathedral Churches, there,—not in a corner,—but under the very eye, and with the open sanction of the highest ecclesiastical and civil authority, has the choral service been continued ever since the Reformation. And if in any other church or chapel, there have been endowments for choirs, and the other means of having the choral service, there it has been established and kept up. I allude here to Collegiate Churches, which are not Cathedrals, as Westminster, Southwell, and Wimborne Minster; to the chapels of colleges in the Universities, and at Winchester and Eton; and to the private chapels, which in former times were appendages to the mansions of the nobility, and to the palaces of the bishops. I may instance the Chapel at Cannons near Edgeware, where Handel officiated as chapel-master to the Duke of Chandos, and that of the famous musician, the Earl of Mornington, at Dangan Castle, County Meath.\* Lord Mornington was father of the Duke of Wellington; and has left several well-known chants, which are now used in almost every church of the kingdom. These establishments prove incontestably, that the choral service was the rule; it was to be celebrated when attainable; the so-called parochial service, a degradation, permitted, because of inability to maintain a choir. A third proof is afforded by Queen Elizabeth's injunction, before quoted, which does not limit the choral service to Cathedrals, but expressly *orders* it in *Parish Churches*, and enjoins that wherever there was an

\* Vide Jebb on Choral Service.

endowment for a choir of men and boys, the same was to be preserved intact. A fourth proof is afforded by the chain of writers from the Reformation downwards, who have given music for psalm, prayer, litany, and response; Cranmer, Marbeck, Barnard, Clifford, Lowe, Playford, Boyce; their works in print, besides great numbers in manuscript, afford distinct proof that the Choral Service was sanctioned by all lawful authorities from the days of Edward the Sixth to those of George the Third. Copies of choral service books, from the now desecrated chapels of the nobility, are not uncommon at old book stalls, and are eagerly bought by musical antiquarians. Look, too, at this second edition of Boyce's Cathedral Music, published in 1788; look at this long list of country churches, the quires of which were subscribers, some for two sets.\* Now tell me, if quire music was lawful and customary in the last century; is it quite correct to call it a Popish innovation in this? I must say, that so far as legality goes, the Choral Service stands on as strong a ground of law and custom, as any one institution in the land.

Mrs. B. Lawful or not lawful, my friend Mumble and the vestry of St. Boniface, will insist upon it that it is Popish; and I firmly believe, that if an angel said that any thing with the least savour of Popery about it was right, he would not be listened to.

B. Ah! there is nothing in the world like a good *cry*, as the "Times" says; no argument can stand against a nickname.

\* The list includes Ellaston, Staffordshire; St. Matthew's, Douglas; Hay, Leigh, Naworth, Oldham, Oulton, and Thornton, in Lancashire; Nayland, Suffolk; Sowerby, Yorkshire; Stockton, Salop; Ridlington, Rickmansworth, Walcott, Walton, and many other places. It would be curious to know the condition of these copies, so subscribed for, at the present day.



F. Yet if I could condescend to adopt such a line of attack, I might easily show that the Mumbles, in the way in which they choose to have the service performed without any open voice from the people, without any audible response, except that of the clerk, and with all the congregation whispering, are far more Popish than we who desire all the congregation to chant their responses aloud. For look at the Prayer Book. That orders the Lord's Prayer to be said by priest and people *with a loud voice*; and you see the meaning of the *loud voice*, if you compare the words *clara voce* and *secreto*, in the Romish book we have been looking at. Get the people to say it with a *loud voice*, and they would soon chant spite of themselves. But the Romish books order the Lord's Prayer to be said *secreto*; that is, to be whispered or muttered; and thus you see that your puritanical friends adopt a Romish practice, in preference to one which is sanctioned by the Prayer Book. Here, however, we must pause for the present.

B. You ought to read Lord Stowell's judgment.

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### LORD STOWELL ON THE LAW OF CHURCH MUSIC.

The Office of the Judge promoted by Hutchins v. Denziloe and Loveland.

9th February, 1793. Proceedings against a Churchwarden, for interfering to obstruct and prohibit the form of Singing, &c., which had been authorized by the Minister; sustained.

THIS was a proceeding against the Churchwardens of the parish of *St. Botolph, Aldersgate*, at the promotion of the Rev. *John Hutchins*, officiating and licensed Curate of the said parish, by articles; and the offence was thus stated in the citation: "More especially for obstructing and prohibiting, by your *own pretended power and authority*, and declaring *your resolution to continue to obstruct and prohibit*,

the singing and chanting by the parish clerk and children of the ward, and congregation, accompanied by the organ."

On the part of the Churchwardens, it appears to have been supposed, that as they paid the organist and managed the children, they were to direct when the organ should or should not play, and when the children should or should not chant.

The Clergyman had ordered the playing and singing at certain parts of the service. The Churchwardens forbade both.

#### JUDGMENT.

SIR WILLIAM SCOTT.—This is a proceeding by articles against the Churchwardens of *St. Botolph, Aldersgate*, the nature of which has been fully set forth.

The articles are objected to on many grounds.

First, on point of form \* \* \* \*

[Here follow technical observations on the proceedings; and some remarks on the duties of Churchwardens, whose office the Judge declares to be one "of observation and complaint, but not of control with respect to Divine Worship." His Lordship proceeds thus:]

It is said, that though singing part of the Psalms is properly practised in Cathedrals, it is not so in Parish Churches. No law has been adduced to this effect, but modern usage alone has been relied on; and it is said, that such has been the practice from the time of the Reformation. This, however, is not supported by any particular statement of fact or authority.

In the primitive churches, the favourite practice of the Christians to sing Hymns in *alternate verses*, is expressly mentioned by *Pliny*, in one of his Epistles to the Emperor Trajan.\* The Church of *Rome* afterwards refined upon this practice, as it was their policy to make their Ministers considerable in the eyes of

\* Affirmabant hunc fuisse summam vel culpæ suæ vel erroris, quod essent soliti, stato die, ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem."—Ep. tit. 2, §1.

the common people; and one way of effecting *that*, was by appointing them sole officers in the public service of the Church; and difficult music was introduced, which no one could execute without a regular education of that species.

At the Reformation this was one of the grievances complained of by the laity; and it became the distinguishing mark of the Reformers, to use plain music, in opposition to the complex musical service of the Catholics. The *Lutheran* Church, to which the Church of England has more conformed in discipline, retained a Choral Service.\* The *Calvinistic* Churches, of which it has sometimes been harshly said, "that they think to find Religion wherever they do not find the Church of *Rome*," have discarded it entirely, with a strong attachment to plain congregational melody, and that perhaps not always of the most harmonious kind.

The Reformation of the Church of *England*, which was conducted by authority, as all Reformations should be, if possible, and not merely by popular impulse, retained the Choral Service in Cathedrals and Collegiate Chapels. There are, certainly in modern usage, two services to be distinguished; one the Cathedral Service, which is performed by persons who are in a certain degree professors of music, in which others can join only by ear; the other, in which the service is performed in a plain way, and in which all the congregation nearly take an equal part. It has been argued, that nothing beyond this ought to be permitted in ordinary parochial service; it being *that* which general usage at the present day alone permits. But that carries the distinction further than the law will

\* See the Common Service of those Churches. *The agreement of the Lutheran Churches with the Church of England*, was set forth in a tract under that title in 1715. In which it is said: "It might indeed have been shewn further; the agreement of the *Lutheran* Churches with ours, in the manner of celebrating the public worship; that they agree with us in using a Liturgy, in singing of Anthems, &c. But it is not necessary."—p. 10.

The above tract appears to have been written to obviate any public prejudice against the illustrious House of Hanover, on account of King *George I.* being a *Lutheran*.

support; for, if inquiries go further back, to periods more nearly approaching the Reformation, there will be found authority sufficient, in point of law and practice, to support the use of more music even in a Parish Church or Chapel.

The first Liturgy was established in the time of *Edward VI.* in 1548. This was followed, after a lapse of four years, by a second, which was published in the reign of the same King, in 1552; and the third, which is in use at present, agreeing in substance with the former, was ordained and promulged (1 *Elizabeth*) in 1559.

It is observable that these statutes of *Edward VI.*, which continue in force, describe even-service as even-song. This is adopted into the statute of the first of *Elizabeth*. The Liturgy also of *Edward VI.* describes *the singing or saying* of even-song; and in the Communion Service, the Minister is directed *to sing* one or more of the sentences at the Offertory. The same with regard to the Litany, *that* is appointed to be *sung*. In the present Liturgy the Psalter is printed with directions that it should *be said or sung*, without any distinction of Parish Churches, or others; and the Rubric also describes the Apostles' Creed "*to be sung or said by the Minister and people*," not by the Prebendaries, Canons, and a band of regular choristers, as in Cathedrals; but plainly referring to the service of a Parish Church. Again, in the Burial Service, part is *to be sung by the Minister and people*; so also in the *Athanasian* and *Nicene* Creeds.

The Injunctions that were published in 1559 by Queen *Elizabeth*, completely sanction "the continuance of singing in the Church," distinguishing between the music adapted for Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, and Parochial Churches; also in the Articles, for the administration of Prayer and Sacraments set forth, in the further Injunctions of the same Queen, in 1564, the Common Prayer is directed "*to be said or sung* decently and distinctly, in such places as the Ordinary shall think meet, for the largeness and straitness of the Church and Choir, so that the

people may be most edified." If, then, chanting was unlawful anywhere but in Cathedrals and Colleges, these canons are strangely worded, and are of disputable meaning. But in order to shew that they are not liable to such imputation, I shall justify my interpretation of them by a quotation from the "*Reformatio Legum*," a work of great authority in determining the *practice* of those times, whatever may be its correctness in matter of law. With respect to Parish Churches *in cities*, it is thus observed, "eadem parochiarum in urbibus constitutarum erit omnis ratio, festis et dominicis diebus, quæ prius Collegiis et Cathedralibus ecclesiis (ut vocant) attributa fuit."\* The metrical version of the Psalms was then not existing, the first publication not taking place till 1562, and it was not regularly annexed to the Book of Common Prayer till 1576, after which those Psalms soon became the great favourites of the common people.† The introduction of this version made the ancient hymns disrelished; but it cannot be meant that they were entirely superseded; for, under the statutes of the Reformation, and the usage explanatory of them, it is recommended, that the ancient Hymns should be used in the Liturgy, or rather that they should be preferred to any others: though certainly to perform them by a select band with complex music, very inartificially applied, as in many of the Churches in the country, is a practice not more reconcileable to good taste than to edification. But to sing with plain congregational music is a practice fully authorized, particularly with

\* "The entire mode of city parishes, on Sundays and Feast Days, shall be the same as hath heretofore been assigned to Colleges and Cathedrals."

† "Plain song was retained in most Parish Churches for the daily Psalms, so in the Queen's own Chapels; and in the choir of all Cathedrals and some Colleges, the Hymns were sung after a more melodious manner, with organs commonly, and sometimes with other musical instruments, as the solemnity required. No mention of singing *David's* Psalms in metre, though afterwards they first thrust out the Hymns, and by degrees also did they the *Te Deum*, *Magnificat*, and the *Nunc Dimittis*."—Heylin on the *Reformation*, p. 289.

respect to the concluding part of different portions of the service.

If it be urged that there is any incongruity in this, I answer, that I have to discuss a question of illegality, not of incongruity. It is true, indeed, that what is obsolete is liable to the objection of novelty, and, likewise, that it has been tried and laid aside. The Court, therefore, would not advise the Minister to introduce what may be liable to such remarks, against the inclination of the parishioners, and the approbation of the Bishop. But this is matter of expediency and discretion, which the Court must leave to the consideration of others. Having thus declared that the Churchwardens are not entitled to interfere, and that the practice is legal, it may be expected I should admit these articles. I am certainly authorized to do so; but I shall suspend their admission till the first day of next term, recommending an accommodation to the parties, and only intimating that the general sense of the parish, properly obtained, will weigh very much with the Court in the further consideration of this subject.\*—*Reports of Cases containing the Judgments of the Right Hon. Sir William Scott*, by John Haggard, LL.D., vol. i., p. 170.

\* The articles were admitted as reformed; when the Proctor for the Promoter declared he would proceed no further; upon which the Judge dismissed the other party, but gave no costs.

## CONVERSATION IX.

On the alleged artificiality of Chanting; the Histrionic, *versus* the Church mode.

B. It occurs to me, Mr. Felix, that it is not easy to get over the very first objection that strikes one on comparing the Chanted, or Choral Service, with plain reading,—I mean its elaborate and artificial character; its being the reverse of what is natural and spontaneous. It seems to me indecorous to study the mode or tones in which our prayers should be said: prayer ought to flow spontaneously as it were. But if the clergyman is to chant the prayers, and the congregation the responses and *Amens*, they must study the thing musically to begin with: they must be careful of tune and time, and when to raise and when to sink the voice; all of which things seem inconsistent with simple and general devotion.

F. This is certainly a fair objection. However, it needs but a simple answer. We have been arguing on the ground that our Reformed Prayer Book orders the people to say their Lord's Prayer, *Amens*, and responses, together *aloud*; that if they are to say them aloud, and, together, in a body, they must use a musical tone, else the gabbling and confusion of voice would be indecent; but, we find the musical tones employed for this purpose to be in fact, just what they *ought to be*, and just what you would expect to find *them, that is to say*, so few and simple, that to call

them elaborate and artificial is hardly correct. If elaborate and artificial, they might fairly be objected to; but in fact the musical tones employed in the Church of England since the Reformation, for the *Amens*, *Responses*, and *Suffrages*, are so few and simple, that two repetitions would suffice to learn the whole. I have taught them to children in half an hour; and the little creatures were delighted with them. Nobody, not the poorest or most ignorant person, who wanted to chant would ever find them difficult. Look at them in the First Volume of the *Parish Choir*.

B. But, besides the responses and suffrages, there is in the Choral Service the chanting of the Psalms.

F. And there are chants for the Psalms so simple, that any congregation could join in them.

B. Then there are *Services* for the Canticles.

F. Which form no essential part of the Choral Service: they need never be used in Parish Churches.

B. And there are anthems, which are artificial and elaborate enough.

F. The anthem, which ought always to be sung, "in quires and places where they sing" at all, after the Third Collect at Morning and Evening Prayer, is confessedly elaborate, and intended for the congregation to listen to, not always to join in. And it is the only part of the Choral Service, if it was arranged in the true old Church way, which the congregation could not join in, even without having ever learned music. Dr. Binney, the Dissenting minister, has defended anthems so well, that I may refer you for the present to his book called the "Service of Song." We will talk of anthems and services, and of their use and abuse, another time. Now let me again say, that if the service of the Church of England when fully



and chorally performed, is to be condemned as artificial and elaborate, merely because it includes anthem music (such music, that is to say, as requires some degree of musical training to appreciate and join in), then the worship of the Kirk of Scotland must be condemned too. Here is a book of anthems used in Scotch Places of Worship, and I declare that it, as well as the book published for the use of Surrey Chapel, contains as elaborate music, though not quite so chaste, as any used in Westminster Abbey. However, to stick to our main point, which is the chanting of prayers and responses, you object that such a mode of worship is too artificial; I reply, that the music is the simplest and most natural and intelligible in the world. If listened to once or twice, it could be learned and sung without the slightest effort. In fact I heard the children at St. Saviour's, Southwark, chant the Psalms to the melody of the Responses without ever having learned it at all.

Mrs. B. Well, Mr. Felix, you have answered that part of the objection somehow; but yet the main body of it remains unanswered. Let us take the case of a young clergyman who cannot sing. Now no matter whether the amount of musical knowledge required is great or small, it requires *some* musical knowledge to chant the service. But then how odd and improper it would sound, to hear of a clergyman taking lessons on the art of saying prayers! Fancy a clergyman going to a music-master to take lessons in the Litany; or practising the Lord's Prayer. How shocking it would be! How preferable to read it plainly and devoutly in a natural and spontaneous way.

F. They may be practised reverently or the reverse.  
*A religious mind* will use sacred words carefully at

all times. And I do not see what harm there can be in a clergyman learning to chant the service, if he can increase his usefulness by so doing, though, of course, nobody would use sacred words as if they were merely *do, re, mi*. But what can there be more shocking in the idea of a clergyman going to a music-master (perhaps his own organist, a devout person and a communicant), to learn to sing the service, than in the idea of a clergyman going to a play-actor to learn to read, or more properly speaking, declaim or preach the Service?

Mrs. B. Is such a thing done?

F. Recollect Cowper's description of such a Professor:

“ He teaches those to read whom schools dismissed  
And colleges untaught; sells accent, tone,  
And emphasis in score, and gives to prayer  
The *adagio* and *andante* it demands.”

Now, it is pretty notorious that there are men, some of them decayed actors, who gain a living by teaching young clergymen how to read the Liturgy. You may see their advertisements in the papers. It is no business of ours to meddle with this subject, except to treat it as a fact; showing that plain, devout reading, as you call it, is not of necessity so simple or general an accomplishment as you fancy. Here is a book I stumbled on the other day, and had the curiosity to look at: “*Mr. Garrick's mode of reading the Liturgy of the Church of England.*” Let me dip into it. Here at p. 60, I light on a *dictum* by the Editor, that public worship is the “reasonable service of intelligent creatures, assembled for the purpose of *manifesting by their voice* the mental states of confession, prayer, and praise.” This is quite to my mind, and quite what the Prayer Book teaches. On casting my eye over the introduction, I discover a crowd of

remarks on the *art* of reading, and on the art of concealing that art, so as to make it seem natural. Then there are remarks on the intonations or *speech melodies* that may be used appropriately in addressing God, and in speaking to the people. And here is a specimen of a part of the Burial Service written out with musical bars and rests as it should read.

“ | I am the | resur- | rection | ♩ and the | life, |  
 ♩ | saith the | Lord: | ♩ | he that be- |  
 lieveth, | &c. &c.”

If this is not elaborate and artificial enough, I am much mistaken. But let us come on to the body of this curious book.

“When reading the *three following words*, Mr. Garrick recommended a look expressive of the utmost *suitable gravity* to be cast slowly around the congregation, the voice rather *low*, and denoting together with the whole manner, that *solemn* and *reverential* respect which is due to the Place of Public Worship.

“*Dearly beloved brethren,*—

“Here make a pause much longer than the comma, or indeed than the time which is usually thought to be necessary after a semicolon. Then proceed with a solemn dignity of tone, and with a tenor of smooth regular delivery—

“*the scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness—*

“the word manifold with some impression, and in a manner expressive of the utmost sorrow and contrition for our acknowledged transgressions—

“*and that we should not dissemble, nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our Heavenly Father—*

“an awful look upwards when repeating from ‘before the face,’ &c., was practised by Mr. Garrick.”

*So this book goes on.*

*Now, my dear friend, all this may be right or*

wrong, and 'tis no business of mine to call it wrong; but if the laity who love music, and can pray, aye, and pray fervently too, in a musical tone, are to be told that music is too artificial, and that a clergyman ought not to be expected to bestow time on learning to chant, and that it is better to abolish choral service than put clergymen to the trouble of learning music, why then I think we may fairly retort, by asking if it is fit to study intonations, and speech melodies, and modes of looking pious, and, in fact, *acting* the Liturgy after the pattern of any actor, dead or living.

B. But surely *every* clergyman need not study this impertinent book, in order to read well?

F. No more than every clergyman need go to a music-master to take lessons in the Litany, in order to chant devoutly. Now let us look at the matter of fact. We find in all religious denominations, that a different tone of voice is used in the public offices of religion, from that which is used in common conversation. That it is universal, proves that it is natural and spontaneous; but there are diversities of manner, arising from accidental circumstances. The Jew adheres to his own ancient chant; the Churchman, whether Greek, or Latin, or English, adheres likewise to the ancient chant, which was derived from the Jews by the early Christians; they all, boasting of an unbroken chain of doctrine and custom, adhere to the traditions of their predecessors. The modern separatist, who cannot have any precedent whatever of more than two centuries' date, and whose boast it is to cast off all conformity with ancient custom, repudiates the chant but invents a new prayer-tone for himself. Did you ever go into a place of worship belonging to dissenters? Can there be any doubt of the existence of *certain conventional tones, or speech melodies,—we*

might call them *chants*,—used in their extempore addresses to the Almighty?

B. Oh, yes, I admit that. We sometimes spend an evening with a dissenting minister, and he usually engages in devotional exercises before supper; and if he were to speak in an unknown tongue, I could tell by the tones of his voice when he was praying.

F. I'll read you a passage from that very charming book, the *Apology for Cathedral Service*, on this very point, and likewise the following bit from Hooker. It relates to the duty of the laity to *speak out*, to use their voices, not merely to mutter or whisper in church. And that, as it will not be difficult to show, is the turning point of the whole discussion.

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#### HOOKE ON THE SAYING ALOUD BY THE PEOPLE OF PARTS OF DIVINE SERVICE.

“Could there be anything desired better, than that we all, at our first access unto God by prayer, should acknowledge meekly our sins, and that not only in heart but with tongue, all which are present being made ear-witnesses, even of every man's distinct and deliberate assent unto each particular branch of a common indictment drawn against ourselves? How were it possible that the Church should anyway else, with such ease and certainty provide, that none of her children may, as Adam,\* dissemble that wretchedness, the penitent confession whereof is so necessary a preamble, especially to common prayer.

“In like manner, if the Church did ever devise a thing fit and convenient, what more than this, that when together we have all received those heavenly mysteries, wherein Christ imparteth himself unto us,

\* *Job. xxxi. 33.* “If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by *hiding mine iniquity in my bosom.*”

and giveth visible testification of our blessed communion with Him, we should, in hatred of all heresies, factions, and schisms, the pastor, as a leader, the people, as willing followers of him, step by step, declare openly ourselves united as brethren in one, by offering up, with all our hearts and tongues, that most effectual supplication wherein he unto whom we offer it, hath himself not only comprehended all our necessities, but in such sort also framed every petition as might most naturally serve for many, and doth, though not always, require, yet always import a multitude of speakers together? For which cause communicants have ever used it; and we at that time, by the form of our very utterance, do show we use it, yea, every word and syllable of it, as communicants."—*Ecc. Polity*, book 5, ch. xxxvi.

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#### ON NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL READING.

[From the *Apology for Cathedral Service*, p. 89.]

"It is often maintained that the service of the Church should be invariably read, because it is not *natural* to chant it. But if chanting be artificial, what are we to think of the 'Art of Reading,' on which so many volumes have been written, and so many lectures delivered? The objectors appear to have forgotten that we sing before we talk; and they require to be reminded that, though we must be taught to read with great pains, we all chant without any teaching whatever. If a child that has just learnt to talk receives unkind treatment from a playfellow, it chants out its little griefs in the mother's ear, with eyes filled with tears, that give sufficient evidence of sincerity and naturalness. When children want to obtain any indulgence or a present, we must all acknowledge that the coaxing tones nature suggests to them for ensuring the success of their petition, have much more affinity with chanting, than with the instructions of Sheridan and Walker. At a somewhat later period, when they have been laughed out

of a way of speaking which would be called babyish, children are everywhere disposed to chant their lessons. It is a slander upon our first instructors to say that they try to teach us in a sing-song manner. I knew my own dame (bless her memory), in after time, and can testify that she was an excellent reader. I never heard her sing a syllable; but her good sense forbade her opposing the natural dictate which led us to speak to her in one way, and repeat to her in another. In this judgment, she unconsciously fell in with an opinion thus expressed by one of the wisest men her affectionate scholar has had the happiness of knowing:—‘Prose, at least in all argumentative and consecutive works, differs, and ought to differ, from the language of conversation; even as reading ought to differ from talking. It is no less an error in teachers, than a torment to the poor children, to enforce the necessity of reading as they would talk. In order to cure them of *singing*, as it is called, that is of too great a difference, the child is made to repeat the words with his eyes from off the book; and then, indeed, his tones resemble talking as far as his fears, tears, and trembling will permit. But as soon as the eye is again directed to the printed page, the spell begins anew; for an instinctive sense tells the child’s feelings, that to utter its own momentary thoughts, and to recite the written thoughts of another, as of another, and a far wiser than himself, are two widely different things; and as the two acts are accompanied with widely different feelings, so must they justify different modes of enunciation.”\*

“It is but lately that I was in a little church in one of the most sequestered and unsophisticated spots of the kingdom, while the boys and girls of the place were saying their catechism. Yet even here the sweet intoned voices of the children gave the *responses* so chantingly, as instantly to remind me of their little cathedral brethren. This was in South Wales.”

\* S. T. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, ii. 60.

## CONVERSATION X.

Cathedrals and Collegiate Churches; their Nature and Objects; in what respect the Cathedral Service differs from the Parochial; Anthems; the Holy Communion; the Philosophy of Praise.

Mrs. B. I HAVE discovered a great defect in your case, Mr. Felix. Your argument, from beginning to end, has been, that *the people* ought to join with heart and voice in the service; and that the very idea of a Choral Service, is the idea of a whole multitude of worshippers singing together. Now then, why is it, that in Cathedrals, where the service is always choral, the people do not join in the singing at all?

F. A fair objection, well put, Mrs. B. Let us go into the case; and first of all, what is a Cathedral? It is the chief church of a diocese; in which is placed the Seat (whence the word See), or Throne, or Chair of the Bishop; the name being derived from *Cathedra*, which signifies a chair.

B. But there is no Bishop's Throne at Westminster Abbey, or St. George's Chapel, at Windsor; and yet they are Cathedrals, are they not?

F. No, my dear Sir, these are Collegiate Churches; that is, they have attached to them, colleges or societies of persons of all grades, clerical and lay, whose duties are to attend to the proper celebration of Divine Service, and to nothing else. A Bishop's Cathedral may, or may not, be a Collegiate Church, as well. It usually is; but the two things are distinct in nature.

B. The very names of such places fill one with



ideas of sinecures and abuses. What can be the object of such establishments ?

F. "Most certain truth it is," says Hooker, "that Churches Cathedral, and the Bishops of them, are as glasses, wherein the face and very countenance of apostolical antiquity remaineth even as yet to be seen, notwithstanding the alterations which tract of time, and the course of the world hath brought." Of course the cathedral city is the head-quarters of the diocese; the seat of government. There the Bishop lives, and the necessary officers who assist and advise him in the execution of his duties live there too, forming a college, the members of which are able, and bound, because able, to show forth the solemnities of Divine Service, with a frequency, and magnificence, and completeness that could not be attained in a poor country parish, where one clergyman has to do all the work by himself. The word sinecure, by the by, which abuse has made so infamous, once meant no more than *sine curâ animarum*; i. e., without cure of souls; which means that the clergy belonging to them were *unattached*, as they say in the army; aide-de-camps to the Bishop, but not tied down to the duties of any particular parish. Common sense might show, that in any diocese there would sure to be a thousand services which such men might do. Think of the more frequent and eloquent preaching; the superintendence of the Free Public Schools, which are a part of all Cathedral establishments; the example and precedent which a Cathedral should be in all things religious \* \*

B. Do you pretend to tell me \* \* \* \*

*Hic desunt nonnulla in M.S.*

F. Well, Mr. Bray, in these things they have departed, no doubt, from their original pattern; but

'tis no business of mine to find fault, and we may all begin reform at home. But it is evident, that the societies whose sole duty it is to minister the public offices of religion in these churches, are bound to do so, with the highest possible kind of music. In parish churches, the thing must be on a lower level, to accommodate the necessities of the people. In Collegiate Churches, it is bound to be on the highest scale, for the glory of God. In the one there should (except the anthem) be no music that the people cannot join in. In the other, for the greater glory of God, the music should be of the highest sort, which the people cannot be expected to join in except mentally.

Mrs. B. Well, this seems reasonable. But all pomp and ceremony are suspicious. I would rather worship in spirit and in truth with Lydia on the bank of a river, than join in a procession of surpliced priests in the most gorgeous Cathedral, where the spirit and the truth are wanting.

F. Of course you would; but you are copying from old Sir Edward Dering, the regicide, who said that one groan in the spirit, is better than the noise of all the sackbuts, harps, psalteries, and dulcimers of King Nebuchadnezzar's band. Suppose you were to say, that you would sooner have a good dinner, with a hearty welcome, in a poor cottage, than a bad dinner, off gold plate, in a palace, where there was no welcome? Can't you see, that besides the intrinsic folly of such an argument, there is both pride and malice in it?

Mrs. B. Pray do not be angry, Mr. Felix; women, I suppose, are not good at arguments.

F. You begin by comparing two things that can't be compared; and say you prefer sincerity by the

river side, to hypocrisy in a Cathedral. Who would not? Then you take it for granted that all the worshippers by the river side are sincere; which is not modest: and all the others, hypocrites, which is not charitable. Is there no hypocrisy at Wapping? and no sincerity in Belgravia?

Mrs. B. I really beg your pardon; but the expression I have used is so common.

F. I know it is. I have heard it a thousand times. Thus it runs. Give me sincere devotion in an unadorned rustic church, rather than splendid ceremonial in a gorgeous Cathedral. Now, it is quite fair to say, give me sincere devotion anywhere or anyhow, rather than empty formality anywhere or anyhow. But it is quite unfair to mix up the sincere devotion with the rustic church, as if they went together as a matter of course; and then to imply that the gorgeous Cathedral and heartless formality are also necessarily coupled together. I say, give me sincere devotion, and the gorgeous Cathedral, and solemn service likewise, both to honour God, and to help our devotion.

Mrs. B. But here comes the question. Ought we to want any help to our devotion? Ought not the simplest and plainest mode of worship to suffice if we are sincere?

F. This is another of those arguments which we hear every day; but which really has nothing to stand upon. I was in a railway carriage the other day, when the conversation fell, as usual of late, upon the National Defences. "Ought we, Sir," said a Radical M.P., "to want 80,000 militia after a forty-years' peace?" "Perhaps we *ought* not," was the reply; "but it seems we *do*." So I say in the case of Church *Music*. Whether we *ought* to want it is one question; *but the best of us do* want some help. Think of

George Herbert walking into Salisbury to attend the Cathedral; and look in the *Apology for Cathedral Service*, and read how Henry Martyn, and Hannah More, found help in their devotion from Church Music. But whether we do want it, or ought to want it, or the reverse, I say we are entitled to it, and that it is a means which the Creator has placed at our disposal, with full right and sanction for its use.

Mrs. B. What is that pile of books close to your elbow, that you keep looking into, Mr. Felix. Let me see. *Jebb on the Choral Service*; *Wordsworth's Poems*; *Keble's Edition of Hooker*; *Ruskin's Modern Painters*. If all these books are on your side, no wonder that you make short work with such arguments as we can bring against your much-loved Choral Service.

F. Well, Mrs. Bray, I think I feel myself strong enough, with such allies, to quit the defensive, and sally out to make an attack on the enemy; and I will say, that when we claim a liberty to use Church Music, and decent ceremonial, as a help to our devotion, we do but state the feeblest side of the argument. But now I turn upon you, and state that Church Music must be considered, not as a mere provision for our use; but as a thing imperatively necessary, a homage we must pay to the glory of God. And I will say, that if any ornament, ceremony, grandeur, or anything beyond mere food, clothing, and shelter, are of any use whatever, or are lawful to be enjoyed in any way, it is also lawful to use them in proper kind and measure in the worship of God. Now we may fairly discuss this as a philosophical, and not as merely a religious question; because the modes by which we pay respect or reverence, or show honour, are under all circumstances the same in principle.

B. This sounds odd; so pray explain what you mean, without going too deeply.

F. Look at the philosophy of the thing, and you will see that all our ideas of dignity, solemnity, reverence, awe, sublimity, splendour, grandeur, and beauty, are derived from our contemplation of the works and attributes of the Creator. And the means by which we can express these ideas, or by which we can show respect or honour to any Being, Divine or human, consists in the employment of certain symbols, which may serve to bring the attributes of God before our minds. Now these symbols, or language, of praise, are the same in essence at all times and in all places, and are concordant with that constitution of mind which the Creator has given us, and with his own written Book of Revelation. The first thing is to set apart certain days, called holy days; which are observed, first, by rest from all worldly and ordinary labour (which, as is well known, has given rise to the popular idea of holidays, as days of rest from labour); secondly, by bounty to the poor, and a more liberal indulgence in meat and drink (an inherent and necessary part of all holidays): thirdly, by solemn assemblies for the worship of God, and more particularly for praise. Concerning the place of assembly, we instinctively seek temples, vast and ancient, of which we can say,

“ They dream’t not of a perishable home,  
Who thus could build.”

And we revere vastness and antiquity, because they are qualities the least distant from the infinite substance and infinite continuance of God. Concerning *the general manner of conducting public worship; whence do we derive our ideas of decent order?*

Why do we naturally go in stately procession, rather than in tumultuous disorder? Surely, if there is one thing that gives a more awful sense of the Divine power, it is the regular, incessant, imperturbable progression of the heavenly bodies; the recurrence of light and darkness; of the months and seasons. This is the fundamental source of our ideas of all that is orderly and solemn; nay, the very word *solemn*, signifies no more than a thing of fixed annual recurrence. Lastly, concerning the act of praise itself; it consists partly in the delivery of orations; partly in the recitation of poetical compositions, setting forth the greatness and goodness of the Person whom we desire to praise. But what is poetry? What is the right way of reciting it? Poetry, especially that of the Bible, is not mere dry pedestrian narrative; but is enriched with every ornament of language; is arranged in musically flowing periods; is measured into symmetrical verses; disdaining plain narrative, it clothes fact with the graces of imagery, similitude, and metaphor; instead of coldly addressing the reason, it rouses the passions; appeals to our love, fear, hope; works not on our knowledge, but our emotions. But the mode of using poetry, must naturally be that which gives it life and animation; by the beauty and the grandeur of musical sound. Music is the very language of elevated feeling, to use a much abused quotation—

“ 'Tis Nature's voice, and understood alike by all mankind.”

B. Well, Mr. Felix, you have been reading to good purpose. I see your philosophy is not utilitarian.

F. Yes, it is; but I do not confine my ideas of utility to the dull terrestrial level of meat, drink, and clothing. I look on things as useful, which give scope

for the higher sentiments ; for the faculties which contemplate the works and attributes of the Creator, the only source, as I contend, of our ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. But to return to our subject. I maintain, against all comers, that a solemn ceremonial in the Worship of God is necessary ; not as a help to our devotion only, but as a positive debt we owe : as the natural, necessary, and only means of expressing the sentiments with which we regard the Almighty. It is an ultimate fact, that whensoever we desire to do honour to any being, Divine or human, we ourselves imitate the Deity in two of his attributes, namely, rest and bounty ; and that we besides hold solemn assemblies for the purpose of praise. But the manner, the details and accessories of such assemblies for praise, are also imitations of the attributes of the Creator, or of the manner in which his works are constituted. When we speak of things solemn, orderly, grand, elevated, sublime, beautiful, or good, we speak of things having certain of the qualities of God, as shadowed forth in his works. This being the case, it follows that everything, be it building, or manner of ceremonial, which has not these qualities, or which has not so much of these qualities as we can confer on them, is so far unfitted to be applied to the worship of God.

B. But what is the measure of magnificence ? How may we avoid running into extremes ?

F. I might reply with one of my favourite authors,—

“ Give all thou canst ; high Heaven rejects the lore  
Of nicely calculated less or more ;”

but I will give you a more practical Anglo-Saxon sort of rule. *The splendour and expense of Divine Wor-*

ship, may have a sort of proportion to the splendour and expense of the means used to express the reverence we feel for the Sovereign, for the Legislature, or to the pomp and ceremonial which people employ as consonant to their own station and dignity. Splendid palaces, and ruinous Cathedrals; gorgeous Houses of Parliament, side by side with a mouldering Abbey, would be justly felt incongruous: the good taste of the public would revolt at it. But it is quite as incongruous for the wealthy landlord to drive in a splendid equipage, from his well adorned mansion, to a beggarly dilapidated church; and, for the tradesman or farmer, if a damp, dirty church stand in contrast to a warm and neatly furnished house. So likewise, if people don't care for music; have no ear for it; never go to Exeter Hall, or to the Opera, neglect of Church Music is conceivable. But if they do lay claim to any musical taste, on what grounds can bad or careless music in church be excused? This brings us back to the subject of the Anthem.

Mrs. B. Anthems are considered very objectionable by some persons, because the congregation cannot join.

F. The greater part of the music is purposely intended for the congregation; the Anthem is restricted to those who can sing best, and who exercise their talent for the greater glory of God. If a congregation will not have an Anthem sung in church to the glory of God, and intended to excite emotions of praise, I hope they never allow themselves to sit in Exeter Hall to hear Sacred Music for their own recreation.

B. But are not Metrical Psalms and Hymns sufficient?

F. As a churchman, I quote the Prayer Book.



"In quires and places where they sing, here followeth the Anthem." If the Anthem can be sung, it ought to be. But there is one other part of the Choral Service which is in fact the most essential, but the most neglected; the *Sursum Corda*, *Sanctus*, and *Gloria in Excelsis* in the Communion Service.

B. If these were sung, most people would be surprised and shocked at the novelty.

F. I dare say they would. And yet look at the facts of the case. The *Gloria in Excelsis* is the most ancient Morning Hymn of the Church; from the very foundation of the Christian Religion it has been sung; like the *Sanctus*, it is of heavenly origin, and was sung even by angels; and yet, as you observe, a custom which has intrinsic reasonableness in itself, which is sanctioned by the positive law of our own Church, and by the most ancient and unbroken rule of the Church Universal, and which follows the very pattern and precedent of Heaven itself, would be deemed scarcely spiritual enough for our modest modern Puritans.

B. But it might be difficult to have these hymns sung sufficiently well in parish churches?

F. That is a fair objection; but the Plain Chant Service of Marbecke, published in the *Parish Choir*, might be sung by any body of clergy and people without a trained quire. And at all events, the shortcomings of poor parishes are no excuse for the maimed rites of well endowed Cathedrals. Now, to conclude for to-day, I will read you the evidence of two impartial witnesses on the inherent fitness of the Choral Service both to express the feelings of worshippers and to show forth the glory of God. One is a most talented clergyman of the American Protestant Episcopal Church, author of *Christian Hymns and Ballads*;

the other is a well-known Baptist minister, a man of education and good feeling.

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### AN AMERICAN CLERGYMAN, ON CHORAL SERVICE.

[From "Impressions of England," by an American Clergyman, the Rev. Arthur Cleveland Coxe.]

"GOING to St. Paul's to Morning Service, on Sunday, the 4th of May, I entered the south transept, and for the first time beheld its interior. The effect of the immense vault of the dome, as it first struck my sight, was overpowering; the more so, because at that moment, a single burst of the organ, and the swell of an *Amen* from the Choir, where service was already begun, filled the dome with reverberations, that seemed to come upon me like thunder. I was so unprepared for anything impressive in St. Paul's, that I felt a sort of recoil, and the blood flushed to my temples. I said to an American friend, who happened to be with me, 'After all, 'tis indeed sublime!' I now went forward with highly excited expectations, and the voice of the Clergyman intoning the prayers within the choir, increased my anxiety to be, at once, upon my knees. I glanced at the monument of Howard, and entered beneath the screen. The congregation seemed immense. A vergier led us quite up to the altar, and as he still found no place, conducted us out into the aisle, where I passed the kneeling statue of Bishop Heber, with a trembling emotion of love and admiration, and so was led about and put into a stall (inscribed 'Weldland,' with the legend, *Exaudi Domine justitiam*), where, kneeling down, I gave myself up to the solemn worship of God. And solemn worship it was! I never, before or since, heard any Cathedral chanting, whether in England or on the continent, that could be compared to it for effect. The Clergyman who intoned the Litany, knelt in the midst of the choir looking towards the altar. Even now I seem to be hearing his full, rich voice, sonorously and articulately, chanting the suffrage—by thy

*glorious Resurrection and Ascension*—to which organ and singers gave response—*Good Lord, deliver us*—as with the voice of many waters. Then, as the next suffrage was continued, the throbbings and echoes of this organ-blast supplied a sort of under current to its simple tone, at first pouring down from the dome like the floods of Niagara, and then dying off along the distant nave and aisles, like mighty waves of the ocean. Tears gushed from my eyes, and my heart swelled to my throat, as this overwhelming worship was continued. It was all so entirely unexpected! Cold, modern, all but Hanoverian St. Paul's—who dreamed of such a worship here! Yet so it was; and I am sure, from subsequent experience, that it is capable of being made a most attractive Cathedral, and a very useful one. Knock away that detestable screen, and put the organ in a better place; confine the choir to the clergy, and compel all the canons, singers, and officials of every grade to be there; fit up the altar end, and make it new with an immense window, in keeping with the architecture and vastness of the place; subdue the light; set the pulpit at the head of the nave, and let the entire Church be filled with worshippers and hearers; and then, with a little decoration, and warm colouring to aid the improved effect, we shall hear no more of the chilliness and poverty of this august interior \* \* \* \*”—*New York Church Journal*, June 16, 1853.

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#### AN AMERICAN BAPTIST MINISTER ON THE CHORAL SERVICE.

MR. H. W. BEECHER (the brother of Mrs. Beecher Stowe, authoress of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*), a minister of a Baptist congregation at Brooklyn, New York, United States, lately made a visit to England, and, during his stay, extended his tour to the town of Stratford-on-Avon. He happened to arrive at the latter part of the week, and on Sunday attended the *parish church*. So lively a sensation did the services

of this church create in him, that on his return to his native country, he communicated them in a letter to his congregation, through *The Independent* (American) paper, from which we extract the following passages. He commences:

“ As I approached the church, the churchyard was to be passed, and an avenue of lime trees, meeting overhead, formed a beautiful way, and my soul exulted thus to go up to the house of God. In a few minutes, a little spare man, with red collar and red cuffs, advanced from a side room behind the pulpit, and led the way for the rector. \* \* \* \* The sight of this aged man was good; the form of his face and head indicated firmness, but they were suffused with an expression of benevolence. He ascended the reading desk, and the services began. You know that my mother was, until her marriage, in the communion of the Episcopal Church; this thought hardly left me while I sat, grateful for the privilege of worshipping God through a service that had expressed so often her devotions. I cannot tell you how much I was affected. I had never had such a trance of worship, and I shall never have such another view until I gain the gate. The portions which most affected me were the prayers, and responses which the choir sang; I had never heard any part of a supplication—a direct prayer—sung by a choir, and it seemed as though I heard not with my ear, but with my soul. I was dissolved; my whole being seemed to be like an incense wafted gratefully toward God. The divine presence rose before me in wondrous majesty; but of ineffable gentleness and goodness; and I could not stay away from more familiar approach, but seemed irresistibly yet gently drawn towards God—“ My soul, then didst thou magnify the Lord, and rejoice in the God of my salvation.” And then came to my mind the many exultations of the Psalms of David, and never before were the expressions and figures so noble and so necessary to express what I felt. Throughout the

service, and it was an hour and a quarter long, whenever an "Amen" occurred it was given by the choir, accompanied by the organ and congregation. Oh, that swell and cadence ring in my ear yet! Not once, not a single time, did it occur in that service, from beginning to end, without bringing tears to my eyes. I stood like a shrub on a spring morning—every leaf covered with dew—and every breeze shook down some drops. Oh, when in the prayers, breathed forth in strains of sweet, simple, solemn music, the love of Christ was recognised, how I longed then to give utterance to what that love seemed to me! I could scarcely be still from crying out—"I never knew, I never dreamed before, of what heart there was in the word Amen." Every time it swelled forth and died away solemnly, not my lips, not my mind, but my whole being said, "Saviour, so let it be." The sermon was preparatory to the communion, which I then first learned was to be celebrated. It was plain and good; the rector, in his sermon, seemed evangelical, and gave a right view of the Lord's Supper. For the first time in my life, I went forward to commune in an Episcopal Church. I thought of ten thousand things without the least disturbance. It seemed as if I stood upon a place so high, that, like one looking over a wide valley, all objects conspired to make one view. I thought, too, of the general assembly and Church of the First-Born—of my mother, and brother, and children in heaven—of my living family on earth—of you—of the whole Church intrusted to my hands; they afar off—I upon the banks of the Avon!"—*The Guardian*, August 3, 1853.

## CONVERSATION XI.

The Anthem; Use and Beauty of it; Metrical Psalms and Hymns.

F. I SUPPOSE it will not be denied, that the publicly and openly shewing forth the praise and glory of God, is the chief end of Public Worship. It is equally undeniable, that in order to shew forth the glory of God, all the accessories, details, and circumstances must be as good as possible. This is my first position; *good Church Music* is essentially necessary; it is an offering due from us; a debt; a thing we owe to the service of the Church, if we enjoy it anywhere else.\* My second position regards ourselves. Good music does, as a matter of fact, help the devotion of most people. If they find it a help, they are fully authorized by reason and revelation in using it.

B. You think it no harm, then, to work on the feelings, instead of on the reason?

F. Since man has a heart, as well as a head, both should be worked upon. It has often occurred to me to ask one of my friends, who is always declaiming against *externals* in religion, and always taking it for granted that worship when outwardly solemn or even decent, must necessarily be merely formal and hollow, why it is that he runs so eagerly after popular preachers? The Rev. Isaac Watts, the famous author of the *Divine Songs*, used to say that he could not see

\* Malachi i. 8; Leviticus xxii. 20, 24, &c.

what connection there possibly could be between bodily gestures and Gospel truth; and, therefore, he could not see why any action or gesticulation should be used in preaching. So much the worse for the Rev. Isaac Watts. But what other man is there who is satisfied with the logical or orthodox sermon, if cold and dry in style, and tamely delivered? Who is there that is not pleased with the musical voice, the impressive manner, the life and emphasis, the picturesque description, the happy comparison, the touching appeal, the spirit-stirring exhortation of the skilful preacher? Truly oratory is a great gift; and one never so happily used as in the service of the Almighty. But music is the same. If I can't love Church Music, without being accused of leaning on carnal aid, and being told that we ought not to want helps to devotion, and that so as there be sincerity of meaning, outward form signifies nothing; I may fairly retort by asking, why not be satisfied with a sincere and homely statement of Gospel truth? Why wander in search of sermons bedecked with all the graces of oratory? Nay, why did the inspired writers use poetical figures? Why not have given us dry prose?

Mrs. B. That is a homethrust, Mr. Felix. But I suppose people look for edification?

F. Precisely. But why deny me the edification of music, whilst you so greedily run after oratory? "There is no difference in principle," says the Rev. Mr. Binney, the eminent Dissenting Minister, "when exercised by Christian persons and with pure purpose, between the eloquence of song, and the eloquence of speech." The one may be abused; so may the other; but yet he that hath a psalm, as well as he that hath a doctrine, hath a gift that may be exercised for the *edification of the Church*. Now, most of our conver-

sations have been about *congregational music* ; which all persons in church ought to join in, whether skilled in singing or not. But besides this, there should be, as Queen Elizabeth said, " for the comforting of such as delight in music," once at least in every service, an *Anthem* ; a piece of music of more artistic pretension than the congregational *plain tune*.

B. I am nearly fifty, and never heard of having an Anthem in church ; in fact, did not know what an Anthem was, till within these ten years ; and the first I heard, was at a performance of the Sacred Harmonic Society at Exeter Hall.

F. I really want words to express my sense of the injury done to religion by the neglect of the higher departments of Church Music. It is a positive dishonour to the Almighty, not to use the higher, as well as the humbler styles in his service. It is a violation of a positive law of the Church. It takes away one great inducement from the rising population, especially the young men, to attend Divine Service, and interest themselves in it. When children at the National School, they are taught certain Chants and Psalm tunes, which they sing in church. When they leave school, they are cast adrift by the clergy. Suppose the case of youths who have some taste for music. They hear the same drawling Psalm tunes over and over again in Church ; there is no inducement nor opportunity for them to continue their singing in Church, and this tie, at least, is cut asunder. Establish a quire, which *men* can join ; give them real Church Music, and half the temptation to Dissent would be done away with. Besides, see what opportunities of edification are lost ! Anthems are themselves sermons, only more eloquent. They are the choicest *passages* of Holy Writ, illustrated, adorned, enforced,



fixed in the heart, made very part and parcel of our being, by their union with music, which speaks not less eloquently to the imagination, than the words do to the understanding. Did you ever hear *In Thee, O Lord*, by Weldon; or the trio, *O remember not the Sins*, from Battishall's Anthem *Call to Remembrance*; or *Thy Word is a Lantern*, by Purcell; or *Call to Remembrance*, by Farrant? If so, you will be prepared to understand Mr. Jebb, who, in speaking of Jeremiah Clark's Anthem, *I will love Thee, O Lord*, avows "his deliberate conviction, that no commentary which he has ever read, has to him so brought out or illustrated the meaning of that wonderful Psalm, as this composition. Nor can he doubt that the good Providence of God has often exercised an influence over our composers of a secular mind when engaged in the service of the sanctuary." Now, since strains once heard are wont incessantly to return unbidden, and to bring before the mind the words to which they may have been allied, why not let them bring some sacred text, instead of what is merely secular and frivolous?

B. I dare say that the singing of Anthems in Church would have some of the advantages you so warmly describe, Mr. Felix; but I do not see how it is to be done. It would lengthen the service so much, and it is not every quire that could sing such Anthems as you have spoken of.

F. Certainly. But there are plenty of Anthems which are scarcely more difficult than common Psalm tunes; which occupy not more than from one to three minutes in their execution, and which could be sung by a whole congregation, if they chose. For instance, *O Praise God*, by Weldon; *Teach me, O Lord*, by Rogers; *Lord; for thy tender Mercies sake*, that serene

and touching bit ascribed to Farrant; *Wherewithal shall a young Man*, by Alcock; *O pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, by Rogers; and abundance of similar ones published in the *Parish Choir*, and in *Cope's Anthems*, at the cheapest possible rate. Such Anthems as these could easily be sung by any congregation, or by any quire. There are many Churches in which, in defiance of the Rubric, they sing the sentences *I will arise*, and *Enter not into Judgment*, at the beginning of service. These are Anthems; and where these are sung, the proper Anthem could be sung in its proper place.

B. But in our Parish Church, how could we get a quire, and where could they be put? The gallery is filled with the children; there is no chancel; besides, there seems to be a sort of prescriptive custom that the charity children are to be the singers, and of course gentlemen would not like to sit with the children in their gallery.

F. I really do not see what right you have to depute the office of praise in Public Worship to the least educated part of the congregation. But so it is. You make your charity children your choristers, and then having degraded the office, you think it beneath a gentleman to sit and sing with them. God forbid that the charity children should not sing in Church; or that the congregational music should be such as they, or any other of the humblest, cannot sing; but why it should be taken for granted that nothing higher is to be sung, *ad majorem Dei gloriam*, by the better educated classes, I can't divine.

B. If we may quit the subject of the Anthem, let me ask you a question about Psalms and Hymns in metre. Our parish has been in a little commotion lately about a new Hymn Book which the Vicar has introduced. Some elderly ladies imagine that it is

quite against the law to sing anything but the Old Version, or the New.

F. If you want to know the rights of the question, you had better read some "Letters on Metrical Psalmody," published in the *Parish Choir*; but it seems that the singing of such Psalms and Hymns is perfectly legal, though not compulsory, because forming no part of the authorized service. It is a thing that the faithful may do in Church, as they may elsewhere; but when done in Church, it can only be done besides, and in the intervals of, not instead of, the regular service.

B. But is it lawful to sing Hymns or Psalms in metre, that have not received the Royal sanction?

F. To be sure it is. I will read you the Royal sanction which Tate and Brady's version received.

"At the Court at Kensington, December the 3rd, 1696.

"Present:

"The King's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

"Upon the humble petitions of N. Brady and N. Tate, this day read at the Board, setting forth, That the Petitioners have, with their utmost care and industry, completed, *A New Version of the Psalms of David, in English Metre*, fitted for *Public Use*; and humbly praying His Majesty's Royal Allowance, that the Version may be used in such Congregations as think fit to receive it.

"His Majesty taking the same into His Royal Consideration, is pleased to order in Council, that the said *New Version of the Psalms in English Metre* be, and the same is hereby Allowed and Permitted to be used in all such Churches, Chapels, and Congregations as shall think fit to receive the same.

"W. BRIDGMAN."

You observe by this, that the Royal authority does *not pretend to impose* this version, but only to recom-

mend it; and neither law nor custom requires such a sanction. The Royal sanction has been given to Blackmore's, Withers's, and several other versions that are never used in Church; and many Hymns are bound up and used with Brady and Tate, which have never received the Royal sanction. So really this party has not a leg to stand upon. But are not your congregation pleased at having got rid of Brady and Tate?

B. Well, I fancy that such of them as think about it at all, are rather pleased. But some object to Hymns altogether, because Methodistical; others object to some of our new Hymns, because they are translated from the Latin; some fancy that only Psalms ought to be sung, and not merely human compositions.

F. Hymns form no part of the *Choral Service*, properly so called; so it would be beside our purpose to say much about them; but they are independent and superadded (though most laudable) acts of praise on the part of the congregation during the intervals of the Divine offices. But it seems to have been the custom of the Universal Church, from the earliest ages, to employ in Divine Service, without scruple, such Hymns (or Canticles, or Sequences, as certain varieties were called), worthy of such use, as were written from time to time by saintly men, whether clerical or lay. The oldest Hymns in present use, are the *Gloria Patri*, the *Sanctus*, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and the *Te Deum*, all four of which are the production of the Holy Eastern or Greek Church the very cradle of Christianity, and are almost coeval with the Apostles; but were early translated into Latin, and in use all over the Western World. In the fourth century, St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, and St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, were the authors of many Hymns,

which were besides largely added to by others, who imitated the style of St. Ambrose. These Hymns, which abound in the ancient Service Books, are distinguished by a simplicity and grandeur resembling that of the Collects of the Church, and almost approaching that of Scripture itself. There are Hymns for the different hours of the day, the days of the week, and the seasons of the Christian year; for the most part consisting of one short allusion to some Divine act or attribute, and one short Prayer, founded thereupon. *Christe, qui lux es et dies*, O Christ, who art the light and day, which was translated by Bishop Coverdale; *O Lux beata*, O Trinity of blessed light, and *Jam lucis ante terminum* (of which the translation, *O Lord, the Maker of all things*, has been used in Cathedral Service since Henry the Eighth's time), are specimens. You may find them with the original music in Mr. Helmore's *Hymnal Noted*. A little later, Prudentius, a Spaniard, a lawyer and poet, author of *Salvete flores Martyrum*, *Little flowers of Martyrdom*; Sedulius, whose Epiphany Hymn *Hostes Herodes impie, Why Herod rage with impious fear*, is of undying fame; and later still, Venantius Fortunatus, author of the famous *Vexilla Regis*;—St. Gregory the Great, whose *Audi benigne Conditor, Thou gracious Author of our days*, translated by Drummond of Hawthornden, is contained in Bishop Heber's Hymns;—the Emperor Charlemagne, whose Hymn *Veni Creator*, is found in every English Hymn Book, and is used on every most solemn occasion, such as the Coronation of the Sovereign, or Consecration of Bishops;—St. Bernard, author of the exquisite *Jesu, dulcis memoria, Jesu, the very thought of Thee*;—King Robert the Second, of France, whose *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*, is the most pathetic supplication to the Holy Spirit that it is

possible to conceive;—St. Notker, a monk of St. Gall, the reputed author of the Anthem *In the midst of life we are in death*, in the English Burial Service;—Thomas of Celano, whose most wondrous *Dies Iræ*, soothed the dying moments of Sir Walter Scott; besides the unknown authors of the *Adeste Fideles*, and the *Surrexit Christus hodie*, so well known as the Easter Hymn, *Jesus Christ is risen to-day*, and of the *Te Deum patrem colimus*, *Father of all, to Thee we raise*, the magnificent Hymn which they sing at the top of Magdalen Tower, Oxford, on the morning of the 1st of May.—These, and many more, I might enumerate as authors of Hymns which were received at various periods into the Services of the Church before the Reformation, and which are in constant use, and to be found translated or imitated in every Protestant collection, German or English, although they are much better known to the Germans than to us. Since the Reformation, Bishop Coverdale, Archbishop Parker, Bishop Hall of Norwich, Bishop King of Chichester, Bishop Fuller of Lincoln, Bishop Ken of Bath and Wells, Bishop Heber of Calcutta, and Bishop Mant, besides multitudes of priests and laymen, amongst whom George Herbert, Wither, Addison, Charles Wesley, Toplady, Newton, and Cowper, stand conspicuous, till we come to our own Keble; all these prove that the lamp of sacred poetry has never died out in the Church, and that whatever fresh Hymns have been added from time to time during the last 1500 years, have, if worthy, been adopted, as a matter of course, into Public Worship.

B. But the Hymns with Latin names?

F. They have the direct sanction of Bishops Coverdale, Grindal, Heber, and Mant; one of them, under the title *Now that the Day Star doth arise*, was often found

at the end of Sternhold and Hopkins's Psalms ; so you need have no scruple on that head. In the *Parish Choir* collection of Hymns, there are several of them, intermixed with the best of the more modern sort, which are sung daily, and relished by many a family and congregation. People in their families may sing what they like ; in Public Worship everything, as I insist, should be of the best ; and depend on it, there are no Hymns, as there are no Prayers, equal to the ancient ones, or to those framed on their model, in dignified simplicity, in the absence of tawdry ornament and affected expression, and in that reverential character which is most fitted for addresses to the Almighty.

## CONVERSATION XII.

Music at Marriages and Burials ; Social Nature of Public Worship ;  
Modern Fastidiousness.

Mrs. B. You argue poor me very easily into silence ; I only wish you would try your hand on the parishioners of Bogley, who have filled whole pages of the *Weekly Dispatch* with their disputes.

F. What is the matter ?

B. You knew our friend Blear, of the late firm of Ogle and Blear ; he has made his fortune, lives as a country squire, and is now M. P. for Bogley. Well, his wife wanted the parson to church her at home, and he would not. She said it was indelicate, and not becoming for a person of her station to have such things alluded to in public.

F. A very pretty quarrel ; what next ?

B. They proposed a grand christening entertainment, and wanted the baby christened at home just before dinner ; and the clergyman would not do this either. He said they were public offices, and that it would be absurd and wrong to do them in private ; besides that the Squire had no rights in the Church that the labourers had not ; and that it would create jealousy.

F. A sensible man, this parson. What next ?

B. Why, a niece of the former Squire's was to be just



then married. The young people with their friends and neighbours came into the body of the church, where was the parson and the village choir, and a large congregation ; the first half of the service was performed there, at a sort of kneeling place ; and when it was half over, and not before, the Minister and quire went up to the communion table, and they sung the psalm as they went instead of reading it.

F. All very shocking, no doubt ; though unluckily it is quite the letter and spirit of the Prayer Book. But what next ?

B. Why there was a great fuss ; placards and speeches were plentiful ; and Blear (who used to go to meeting when in business) is going to present a petition to the House of Commons about priestly domination, and the rights of the laity.

F. All this is melancholy enough, though so common. But do observe the truly social spirit of the Church. 'Tis as it were one society : what happens to one, good or bad, is interesting to all. Therefore, in all the offices of a private personal kind which admit of it, the congregation is always supposed to be in church, sympathizing with its members. We are baptized, catechized, confirmed, married, and buried, all in public ; whether we are admitted into, or depart out of the visible church, it is always intended that our fellow members should bear their share in the rejoicing or mourning, as the case may be. Common prayer ; all the people meeting in the same building on a footing of perfect equality in the sight of God ; all speaking out with one voice and heart ; no high pews in the best places for genteel sinners, and beggarly benches in dark out-of-the-way corners for the people who need religious comfort and instruction *the most ; that is my idea of a Church service.*

B. Certainly there is nothing incongruous in the idea of music at a marriage.

F. Be it observed, however, that the psalm sung in the marriage service, whilst the priest and clerks, and newly-married couple are going to the Lord's Table, is the *introit* or introduction to the communion office which follows:

B. Ah, that has been another ground of accusation.

F. All over the Christian world it was customary to administer the Eucharist at marriages, "and no Office," says Wheatley, "but the Geneva order ever forbade, nor no Christians, I believe, but the English Puritans, ever found fault with, the administering the Eucharist upon the wedding day." But this is a point that it is no business of mine to argue upon; I will only say that, if a thing is optional, as this is in our church, it is very hard that they who think proper to avail themselves of it, should be reviled by those who exercise the liberty of not doing so. But there is one office which we have yet said nothing about, and that is, the Burial of the Dead; the last mark of respect we can show to our departed friends, a time, consequently, when everything should be of the most solemn order.

B. Yet I have heard you declaim against pomp and expensiveness at funerals.

F. So I do against an absurd imitation of baronial pomp, with its mutes, feathers, and other hollow and paganized nonsense that beggars the living, and does no honour to the dead. I do not object to costliness or pomp; no Christian should be buried like a dog; but the act and its accessories should be religious, not a thing of mere custom and ostentation. However, if you want correct ideas about most of the details of

funerals, I must refer you to the tract on funerals, published by Masters, for the Ecclesiological Society; our concern is only with the music. And to begin with, there are the bells.

B. The bells, part of funeral music?

F. Most certainly, if we may use the word in its widest sense; though it is true they serve other purposes: for instance, the passing bell, which ought to be rung when any one is passing out of this life, that the neighbours may pray for him.

B. But it is never rung now till a man is dead.

F. It used to be otherwise. Writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries often describe dying persons as hearing the bell ringing for themselves. Thus:

“Hark, hark, I hear my passing bell:  
Farewell, my loving friends, farewell!”

At all events, before the funeral, a short peal should be rung, and another after it. Whilst the body is being borne to the church if it is in a quiet country place, or whilst the funeral procession is passing up the path of a large suburban cemetery, the friends who are in attendance should sing a hymn or psalm. This is no part of any liturgical office, but is their act as private Christians; yet it is difficult to conceive of any custom more beautiful in itself, or more useful; in as much as it serves to keep the mind attentive to the solemn ceremonial which is going on, and hinders wandering thoughts and trifling conversation, which are apt to intrude, even at funerals. But when the Priest and clerks or quire meet the corpse and go before it, singing the liturgical sentences; and when the appointed psalms are solemnly chanted; with an *anthem*, as is usual, after the lesson, and those exquisite sentences whilst the corpse is made ready to be

laid in the grave, and the anthem from the Revelations after the committal to the ground ;—I say that any one who cannot feel the inherent propriety of this most solemn service, must be destitute of some of the less base parts of humanity. I won't condescend to argue such a question as this. I might prove from the Bible the duty of a reverential treatment, nay, even of a costly service for the dead. I could read out of Bingham, or even out of the Government Report on Interments in Towns, how the early Christians carried out their dead with hallelujahs and triumphant hymns ; I might quote the deliberate provision of our own Church, in her burial office ; or I might appeal to that instinctive sense of decency, which prompted a whole people to honour a departed benefactor with the most pompous procession, ceremonial, and music, that our times have ever witnessed. But I refuse to argue such a question. A man who cannot feel the natural piety of this, can never be convinced by argument. But I will say, that the funeral of the Duke of Wellington was a national protest against puritanism ; the nation, the people, as one man, did, of pure, innate feeling, sanction all the principles I have been labouring to defend against your arguments.

B. But stop, Mr. Felix ; how could a musical service be procured at every funeral ?

F. In the first place I may observe that a tenth of the expense squandered on vulgar *undertakerism* by the rich, would provide decent funeral rites for all classes : but be this as it may, there is nothing people are so willing to pay for ; nothing which they accept more gratefully. The Emperor Julian the Apostate used to complain that the Christians were gaining all the popularity from the old rites, by their gravity of

manners, their kindness to the poor, and their care in the burial of the dead. I have heard something of a London curate idolized by the lower orders "because of his care for the poor dead;" as a poor woman expressed it. Depend on it that nothing would strengthen the church more than greater care in this respect. You may talk of the church of your baptism; of the place where you plighted the marriage vow; but depend on it, the Church a man has a real feeling for, is that where he has seen committed to the dust the remains of his own family, and where he looks forward for a place himself. That it is which attaches a man to a Church; and there is nothing more affectionately remembered than a careful and loving celebration of the burial service, and nothing more resented than slovenliness or disrespect.

B. Still there is an objection lurking in my mind, to this effect. Music is the natural language of exultation, joy, and praise; and not of penitence, or prayer, or mourning.

F. This is a fundamental mistake. Music is not the expression of any one feeling exclusively, but of all. Just as language is not the means of communicating any one single set of ideas; and just as poetry and painting can depict any subject, whether lively or pathetic. Music is the expression of any strong emotion whatever; the joyful song is not more natural than the plaintive dirge. Besides as there is no psalm or hymn of penitence without some praise, so there is no psalm of praise, not even the *Te Deum* or *Gloria in Excelsis* without some prayer in it for mercy. But music is adaptable to all; to the most exultant, or the most despondent; and equally so to subjects of grave and serene contemplation, from which emotion is excluded. They who object to the singing of prayers

or litanies, should equally object to poetry when made the vehicle of penitence or supplication. But the fact of the existence of the 51st Psalm, is a standing refutation to all such objections; and I would ask any candid person who does not refuse to sing this Psalm in metre, to a plain psalm tune such as St. Mary's (which is the model of a plaintive melody), to make the fair experiment of singing it in prose, to the melody called the Peregrine Tone, and then to sing the *Kyrie Eleison* from Marbecke's communion office, or the concluding sentences, "Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us," from Tallis's Litany, and say where is the difference?

B. I must concede my objections on this score; but I do not feel so easy about the chanting of the collects and prayers.

F. If a clergyman has a keen musical ear; if he hear all the people in church, as they ought to do, saying their amens, and creed, and responses in a united loud musical tone, he will be impelled by nature (provided he does not try not to do it), or rather, he will, as a matter of course, without any effort whatever, go on reading in the same note as that in which the people have just been speaking. The thing is palpable to every one who has any ear at all; and to any reflecting person, it must seem a violation of decency and order, to hear a whole school of children, and a large body of people reciting the creed steadily on one note, and the clergyman using an oratorical kind of tone quite discordant to all around him. Besides I would ask, whether the tones borrowed from the pulpit or the bar—tones used in teaching, or in arguing with, our fellow-creatures—are in themselves more consistent with the idea of prayer than one continued supplicating voice, like the chant?

## CONVERSATION XIII.

The Choral Service not Mediæval, Superstitious, Priestly, or Romish, but Primitive, Orthodox, Popular, and Oriental in its Origin; the Rule of Contrary; the Rule of Charity; Conclusion.

Mrs. B. We must have one more conversation, Mr. Felix, for I have just met a friend who has been reading the "Borealis Review," and is quite primed with arguments against Choral Service in parish churches.

F. Give us his arguments, and let us demolish them, one by one.

Mrs. B. The first is, that it is Popish.

F. That is the never-failing nickname. But let us look at the facts. No doubt the English Prayer Book, and the essential music of the Choral Service were taken at the Reformation, chiefly, though not exclusively, from the Latin Services, much of which had been in use in England for about a thousand years; that is, from the time of St. Augustine's conversion of the Saxons in 595. The Reformers, however, rejected everything new and superstitious, and retained only what was primitive and orthodox. But the primitive and orthodox nucleus of the Roman Liturgy, and the most edifying customs of the Roman Church—music included—are not originally or exclusively Roman, but apostolic, *i.e.* Asiatic, *oriental*, derived from Jerusalem and Antioch, and

common to, and diffused over, all Christendom. For instance, let us first take the office of the Holy Communion, the Christian office or *Liturgy, par excellence*. There are certain central indispensable parts of this, such as the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Sanctus*, the *Sursum Corda*, and the prayers of thanksgiving, and of consecration, which are found in all the oldest national Liturgies; although in their exact order, and minor details, Liturgies have varied from the remotest times in different countries. But all agreed in their choral accompaniments. There are the old Oriental Liturgies, one of which, derived from pure apostolic sources, was in use in Cæsarea in Cappadocia during the latter part of the 4th century, and was generally received all over the East. Let me read a bit out of this book.\* This Liturgy "prevails without any substantial variety, from the northern shore of Russia to the extremities of Abyssinia, and from the Adriatic and Baltic seas to the farthest coast of Asia," to the present hour. Now, the earliest accounts of this Liturgy—the Liturgy of Pontus and Bithynia, where Pliny at the end of the 1st century found the people singing hymns to Christ as God, describe the *Sanctus* as sung by all the people. Again, it is well known, that when St. Augustine came (singing Litanies as he came), to Canterbury in 595, he found, in the almost exterminated Celto-British Church, a Liturgy and customs differing from the Roman. Now, the ancient British Church most probably derived its religion and ritual from the Gallican. The Gallican was a branch, not of the Church of Rome, whose title to be called mother of all churches is ridiculous, but of the Church of Ephesus, which included all the maritime parts of Asia Minor. The first French church was that of Lyons.

\* Palmer, *Origines Liturgicæ*, vol. i., p. 66.



Polthinus, Bishop of Lyons, who died in 177, æt. 90, was succeeded by Irenæus, who had been a disciple of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who had been a disciple of St. John. There was the closest intimacy between the church of Lyons and the mother church of Asia, just as there is now between the churches of England and of Australia; and whilst Lyons sent its missionaries over France, and most likely to England, it sent also the rites of those churches of Ephesus which had been the special care of the Apostle St. John. But these rites included the singing of the *Sanctus* by the people. And, just observe that ancient writers who ascribe the origin of the Christian Liturgies to the Apostles, speak of them as singing them.\* Thus you see, the ancient Gallican Liturgy was not derived from Rome, but from Ephesus; yet it was a musical one. This Liturgy was used in France down to the time of the Emperor Charlemagne; and he it was, who, to please the Bishop of Rome, caused it to be given up, and the Roman to be used in its stead. His father, King Pepin, had before paved the way by introducing the Roman form of chant to the great displeasure of both clergy and people. The Gallican Liturgy, or one much like it, was also used in Spain; but the existence of these national rites being a kind of standing evidence against the claims of Rome to be "mother

\* "We are certain that the tradition of the Irish, and probably of the British Churches was, that St. John actually originated the Gallican rites. The ancient Irish author, whose tract was published by Spelman, is by all critics allowed to have written not later than the beginning of the eighth century. He affirms it positively; thus: "John the Evangelist first chanted the Gallican course [i. e., offices or liturgy, which, as Mabillon observes, this author seems to confound together]; then afterwards, the blessed Polycarp, disciple of St. John; then afterwards, thirdly, Irenæus, who was Bishop of Lyons in Gaul, chanted the same course in Gaul."—*Palmer*.

and mistress of all churches," the Popes were then, as they are to this day, incessant in their endeavours to abolish every vestige of them, and to cause the Roman offices, and those only, to be used. So the Popes induced the Spanish monarchs to abolish the national, and receive the Roman Liturgy. The Spanish Liturgy was abolished in Arragon about 1060, though it was preserved some time longer in Navarre, Castille, and Leon. Roderic Ximenes, Archbishop of Toledo, relates that the clergy and people of all Spain were in disturbance at being compelled by King Alphonso to receive the Roman office. However, the king, urged by his wife Constantia, threatened death and confiscation to all who opposed; and force prevailed. Then, according to Roderic, while all wept and lamented, it became a proverb—(you know the Spaniards are famous at proverbs)—*quo volunt reges, vadunt leges*.\*

B. A regular Gorham case!

F. True, a regular Gorham case; the Church overruled by the State. But to proceed: I am endeavouring to show that the most ancient and indispensable of all the Christian offices, is of Asiatic and not of Roman origin; that it always included the singing of the *Sanctus*, which we now sing, and that therefore the singing of the *Sanctus* is not Roman. In fact, if any juvenile reviewer wants to make out a strong case, I would recommend him to accuse us of following Ephesian, or Phrygian, or Pamphylian, or Pontic, or Bithynian, or Antiochian customs, which would be much nearer the truth. But the Roman liturgy and other offices were derived at first, like the Greek and Gallican, from the Apostolic Asiatic source, and received constant additions from the same source. The Greek *Kyrie Eleison*, the well-known triple invocation, Lord,

\* Palmer's *Origines*, vol. i., p. 166.

*have mercy upon us, &c.*, was introduced into the Romish Church before the year 529. The *Gloria in Excelsis*, a translation of the Greek daily morning hymn, *Doxa en hypsistis*, was ordered to be sung in the Roman Communion-office by Symmachus, Bishop of Rome in the sixth century. Pope Celestine, in 423, appointed one of the Psalms of David to be sung antiphonally by all the people, before the Epistle and Gospel; this was the origin of the *Introit*. But antiphonal singing was a Hebrew custom, and was imported into Rome from Antioch through Milan. The antiphonal chants for the Psalms, now called Gregorian, were arranged by Gregory, from those which St. Ambrose had used at Milan; and Milan is to this day independent of Rome in her liturgy. The Nicene, or Constantinopolitan creed, was not added to the Romish liturgy till long after it had been used by the Churches of Antioch, Constantinople, France, and Spain. The Athanasian creed is not Roman. As in England, the Celtic, Roman, Saxon, and Danish names are memorials of the various races who once dwelt there, so in the Roman offices many things palpably betray their Greek origin. Besides the *Gloria Patri*, *Sanctus*, *Gloria in Excelsis*, and *Te Deum*, there is a Greek hymn called *Trisagios*, to this day sung in Greek, in the Roman offices on Good Friday. *Agios o Theos*; *Agios ischyros*, *Agios athanatos*, *eleison hemas*, the translation of which will remind you of a passage in our burial office: *O God most holy*; *O God most mighty*; *O holy and most merciful Saviour, &c.*, which part of our burial office, by the way, is from a German and not a Romish source. The *Te Deum* is not Roman; whether it were translated by St. Ambrose, Hilary, Nicetius, or Abundius, it matters not; the Lombardic or Gallican Church may claim the praise

of having introduced it into Western Europe.\* The Litany, which from the first was accompanied with psalms and anthems and responses in which the voices of the whole people were united; the general frame of the daily offices, with their intermixture of chanted psalms and lessons, are all of oriental origin;† therefore, they are not Romish.—Q. E. D.

Mrs. B. The next argument was that the so-called cathedral service was composed at the Reformation, by English musicians, expressly to be sung in cathedrals.‡

F. A more ridiculous fiction can hardly be uttered. The old music was taken invariably with the old words. The old responses, psalm-chants, litany, and Ambrosian *Te Deum*, had been long before published for popular use by Cranmer and Marbecke. There are certain parts of the service for which new music is incessantly composed, such as anthems and *Te Deums*;

\* See Daniel, *Thesaurus Hymnologicus*, Lipsiæ, 1844; vol. ii., p. 587.

† “The form of prayer in our Litany, according to which the minister or priest presents, or repeats the beginning of each petition, and the people respond, has been used in the Western churches from a remote period; but we cannot with justice ascribe its origination to these churches. The most ancient Western formularies of this kind are too evidently copied from Greek or Oriental models, to leave any doubt as to the source from whence they were derived. In fact, we have memorials in the writings of primitive antiquity which trace back this sort of prayer to the third century in the Eastern churches; while it does not appear that there are any notices of a similar practice in the West, until after the introduction of processions, in imitation of the Eastern church, which probably took place early in the fifth century.”—*Origines Liturgicæ; or, Antiquities of the English Ritual*. By W. Palmer, M.A. Vol. i., p. 156.

‡ “When the Prayer Book was completed, A.D. 1559, to the celebrated Thomas Tallis!! was assigned the charge of giving musical expression to all those portions of the Liturgy which were to be sung in cathedrals and collegiate churches!!” — *Edinburgh Review*, vol. xcv., p. 134.

and this was done after the Reformation, as it was before and is now; neither more nor less; but the main body of the church service, the old plain chant, was taken along with the old words, as a matter of course.

Mrs. B. By the way, pray explain what is meant by *plain chant*, I often hear of it, and cannot tell what it means.

F. It means a melody, intended to be sung simply in unison by a mass of people. The term *plain* is in contradistinction to *figured* or *harmonized*. Harmonies or *parts* may be added, but not of necessity. The plain song is the regular tune: that which the clergy and congregation are to sing; although skilled persons may add harmonies, vocal or instrumental.

Mrs. B. The next objection is, that the Choral Service is essentially a choir service, as distinguished from congregational; "a sacerdotal performance invented and used to exclude congregational singing."

F. We affirm, on the contrary, that the Choral Service, including psalm-chant, response, and Litany, were always of old, and that we desire them now to be sung by the mass of the congregation. Plain chant to prose words, was the only singing possible to the early Christians. The curate of our parish tells me that the best congregational singing he ever heard in his life, was in a church in Normandy, at vespers, where the peasants chanted their psalms, responses, and hymns, in a way that astonished him, and would astonish our dumb Anglo-Saxon congregations. The Rev. Dr. Wordsworth's "Diary in France" bears the same testimony, and he justly observes that if they can sing their Latin service, our people can easily sing their English service if they choose. And *they do* whenever they have the opportunity and are *properly led* by the clergy.

Mrs. B. But is it possible that congregational singing is permitted in the Romish Church? I thought it was forbidden.

F. That church has quite enough to answer for; we need not heap upon it any false accusations. Pugin, in a tract advocating the restoration of the ancient plain song, speaks in glowing terms of the *Sursum Corda*;—*Habemus ad Dominum*, responded by two or three thousand worshippers in the nave of some of the German churches. I never myself heard so good congregational singing as in the Church of St. Jacques at Dieppe. Both at mass and vespers, all the immense congregation, most of them poor, including abundance of fish-women and peasants in their fantastic costume, sang out most gloriously. They sang chant, response, hymn, canticle, anthem, and creed, everything in fact; in time and tune, and out of time and tune; through nose and through mouth; they sang with accompaniment and without; even whilst the organ was playing a voluntary, some of them helped with singing. I most heartily wished that our people would take a lesson. But at all events the structure, intention, and use of the Choral Service are truly congregational. If in some churches no persons sing save the paid choir, this is their own fault.

Mrs. B. Again, it was urged that metrical psalmody was as essentially Protestant and congregational, as the Choral Service was Popish and uncongregational.

F. Metrical hymnody was introduced by St. Ambrose at Milan. Metrical psalmody was first brought into vogue by French Papists, as a private diversion; it suited Protestants to take it up, and at length it became a badge of Protestantism. In the English Church metrical psalmody is allowed or connived at, but it is a spontaneous and unauthorised act of the congrega-

tion, with which the clergyman, officially, has no concern. In Winchester Cathedral, the anthem, a part of the legitimate service, is given out by one of the priests: the metrical psalm which they intrude between the Nicene Creed and sermon, is given out by a lay clerk. It is in fact a lay act, purely unliturgical. But the chant is as easily sung as the psalm tune, neither more nor less. Congregations that sing the one always sing the other; and if in any church the people sit silent during the responses, they also stand silent during the metrical psalm.

Mrs. B. Another objection is, that anthems never could have been intended for parish churches because parish churches had no organs till of late years.

F. The only organ necessary in church for anthems or anything else, is the organ of the human voice. All the old church music is vocal; obligato instrumental accompaniment is a modern innovation. I would respectfully observe that there is no organ in the Pope's chapel at Rome, any more than there is in John Knox's in Scotland. Objections such as these are frivolous, and only damage the objector. I will repeat again, that the English services are essentially and primitively musical, because congregational. We want the voices of all the people—clerical and lay—men, women, and children. We want musical tone as the natural means of uniting those voices. The Church of England took the primitive music with the primitive doctrine and offices. The English Reformation reminds us of the succession of a legitimate sovereign; no violent disturbance, offices continued, precedent respected. The Swiss and Scotch Calvinistic Reformations remind one of revolution and usurpation; every *vestige* of the old rule abolished; change made for *change's sake*; good things upset as well as evil; the

old rulers massacred, their property confiscated; mob law triumphant; ending in a tyranny as grinding as that which was abolished, but without its prestige.

Mrs. B. Now, spite of all your explanations, I have some objections to urge. Is it not a sufficient argument against the choral service, that it is unpopular, and that people do not like it?

F. This may be a very valid argument against introducing it in places where the people do not like it; but, surely it cannot be worth anything as regards the merits of the thing itself. I know it is quite parliamentary to say, "that the minds of the people are not prepared" for such and such a thing; or that public opinion is against it; and so forth; but if it is not the business of statesmen, it is of religious men, to teach the "minds of the people" what is right, and to educate "public opinion" in favour of the right; not to surrender a truth because it happens to be unpalatable.

Mrs. B. Then you mean to say, that it is not likely that clergymen would introduce the choral service into their churches, unless gradually, and unless the congregation were fit to receive it. But supposing only one or two persons find it a stumbling-block, and that their conscience is so seriously offended, that they feel themselves obliged to quit the Church, and join some dissenting body, rather than hear the psalms or prayers chanted?

F. I will answer you with this sentence out of Hooker. "The common conceit of the vulgar sort is, that whensoever they see anything which they dislike and are angry at, to think that every such thing is scandalous, and that themselves in this case are the men concerning whom our Saviour spoke in so fearful a manner, saying, 'Whosoever shall scandalize or offend



any one of these little ones which believe in me,' (that is, as they construe it, 'Whosoever shall anger the meanest and simplest artizan which carrieth a good mind, by not removing out of the Church such rites and ceremonies as displease him,') 'better he were drowned in the bottom of the sea.' But hard were the case of the Church of Christ if this were to scandalize." If the choral service were established by the choice of the minister and of the congregation, any persons who did not like it, ought in common fairness to yield to the voice of their pastor, and the wishes of the majority of their fellow parishioners.

B. But suppose your lovers of music are a minority?

F. I will answer in the words which Ruskin uses on an analogous subject. "Is it right because they are a minority, that there should be no respect for them, no concession to them; that their voice should be utterly without regard in the council of the nation; and that any attempt to defend one single district from the offence and foulness of mercenary uses, on the ground of its beauty and power over men's hearts, should be met, as I doubt not it would be, by total and impenetrable scorn."\*

The great object of all churchmen at the present day, is to conciliate and win over the people; the middle and lower classes. Now amongst these, depend on it, church music, with fair play, would soon command a majority; we should soon have, as St. Basil describes it, the mixed sound of men, women, and children's voices, as glorious as the noise of the waves on the shore. The opposition to church music never comes from the people, but from some languid aristocrat, or busy lawyer, or tradesman recently become

\* *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. chap. 1, note.

rich, or radical M. P. hungering and thirsting for grievances; such people work on the prejudices of the multitude, and have their way for a time.

Mrs. B. But is it not objectionable to have anything in common with Romanists, which we can dispense with?

F. Every honest and reasonable man endeavours to follow the rule of conscience and of reason. He does not refuse to do anything good, because bad men happen to do the same. If such a rule of contrary were acted on in ordinary life, it would lead people into such endless folly and mischief, that they would soon see the absurdity of it. It is, unluckily, acted on in matters of religion, and yet people shut their eyes to the absurdity and mischief of it.

Mrs. B. How is the rule of contrary acted on in religious matters?

F. One party of Christians lays great stress upon preaching; and delights in long extempore sermons. Another, by way of contradiction, affects to slight preaching. Romanists, at a particular period, loved metrical psalmody; Protestants took it up; and then the Romanists held it as a thing heretical, and abhorred it. One section of Christians delights in an exuberance of ornament for their Churches; another, by way of contradiction, worships in places ostentatiously naked and bare. One section of Christians prefers chanting the Psalms to the singing of metrical Hymns; therefore another sings Hymns with the greatest devotion, but looks upon chanting the Psalms as objectionable. Now such a line of conduct as this is not manly, it is not rational; it only leads into one superstition in order to shun another. We surely ought to seek out what is right, and follow that; and rejoice if others, even our enemies, do the same: not commit absurdities

ourselves, because our enemies happen to be in the right.

B. Well, Mr. Felix, it would be ungrateful if we were to deny that these conversations have afforded us much gratification; and as an honest man, I must confess that I have learned that we ought never to condemn anything off-hand, as a mere childish absurdity, without seeing whether it have some reason to stand upon. We may not agree with all your sentiments, yet we must admit that the Choral Service is successfully shown not to be the mere superstitious mummary we once thought it. But I suspect that what with people who positively hate and suspect Church Music, and what with the still greater number who are utterly indifferent on the subject, any process of reformation will be a very uphill game.

F. One great object will be attained, if people, although they may not care for, or even may positively dislike, Church Music, will yet cease to suspect and malign those who do love it. There is great room here for mutual forbearance and charity. I suppose it is impossible for any one who has no musical ear, and no degree of musical education, to conceive of the enthusiasm with which Ecclesiastical Music is regarded by those who have a taste for it. In their minds, music blends itself naturally with every sentiment; prayer and praise, grief and joy, seem expressed with but half their force if musical accent be wanting. But I grant that musical people ought to allow to others the indulgence they claim for themselves; and ought not to accuse others either of religious apathy, or of disaffection to the Church, merely because they oppose Church Music; when, after all the real cause *is a simple want of musical taste.* Musical or not *musical*, there is room enough in the Church for us

all. There is a letter of Arnold's, in which this is said in so touching and heavenly-minded a way, that I must read it by way of farewell.

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DR. ARNOLD ON THE RULE OF CHARITY.

*To the Rev. U. Hamilton.*

*Rugby, May 4, 1842.*

I thank you very much for the book which you were so kind as to send me . . . . I was delighted to see translations of some of my favourite Hymns\* in Bunsen's collection, and shall try to get them sometimes sung in our Chapel. I will try also again to understand the very old music which you speak of, and which Lepsius, at Bunsen's request, once played to me. It is a proof of Bunsen's real regard for me, that he still holds intercourse with me, even after I proved utterly insensible to what he admires and loves so much. But seriously, those who are musical can scarcely understand what it is to want that sense wholly: I cannot perceive (*καταλαμβάνειν*), what to others is a keen source of pleasure; there is no link by which my mind can attach it to itself; and, much as I regret this defect, I can no more remedy it, than I could make my mind mathematical, or than some other men could enter into the deep delight with which I look at wood anemones or wood sorrel \* \* You will be glad to hear that I wrote to Keble lately, and had a very kind answer from him. I yearn sadly after peace and harmony with those whom I have long known, and I will not quarrel with them if I can help it; though, alas! in some of our tastes there is the music which to them is heavenly, and which to me says nothing; and there are the wild flowers, which to me are so full of beauty, and which others tread upon with indifference . . . . If you come to us in

\* The ancient Latin hymns.

about a month's time, I hope I shall be able to show you four out of the seven windows in our Chapel supplied with really good painted glass, which makes me not despair of getting the other three done in good time."—*Stanley's Life of Arnold*, 6th Ed., p. 522.

FINIS.

